

MEMOIRS
OF
ANCIENT
CHIVALRY

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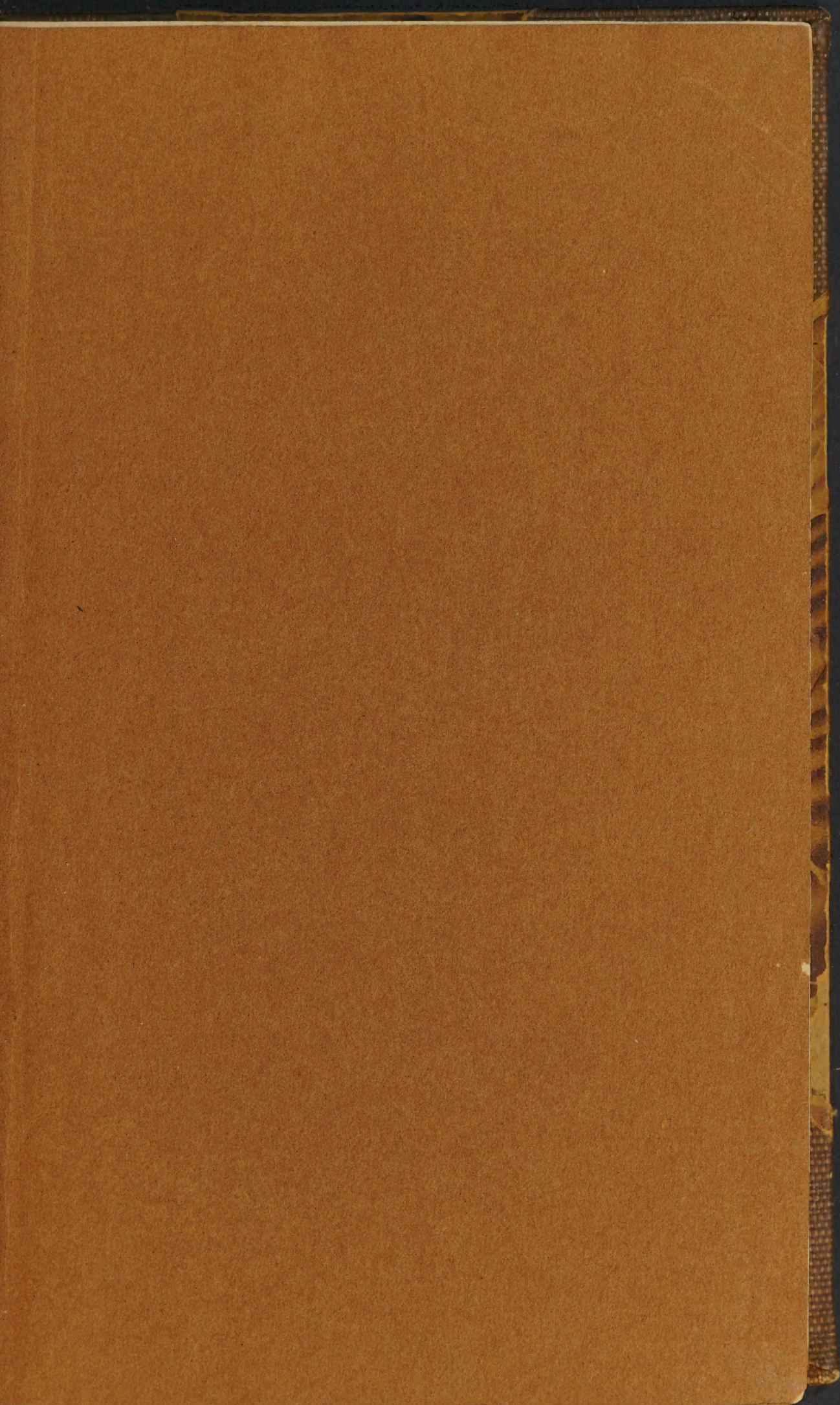
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M E M O I R S

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ANCIENT CHIVALRY.

MEMOIRS
OF
ANCIENT CHIVALRY.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
THE ANECDOTES OF THE TIMES,
FROM THE
ROMANCE WRITERS AND HISTORIANS
OF THOSE AGES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
MONSIEUR DE ST. PALAYE,
BY THE
TRANSLATOR OF THE LIFE OF PETRARCH.

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P R E F A C E.

AS the subject of this Translation carries us back to a very distant period, it may be of use to make a few previous reflections, particularly on the ancient romance writers, who are so continually referred to in it.

THE progress of human knowledge, and its good effects on the

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conduct of mankind, if justly considered, cannot admit of a doubt. But, to accomplish this end, the world should not only be viewed collectively, but with a peculiar attention, and classed into distinct periods: for as a general map of the earth will give an incomplete idea of any distinct part, so a cursory observation of different ages, will serve merely to produce a confused notion of what passed in any single century. A minute view, therefore, of those æras, wherein great events have taken place, or distinguished characters have appeared,

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peared, is essential to the obtaining a right judgment of the increase of science, and the progress of the arts: and it would be well worth while to pass over a multitude of tyrants, whose lives are written in blood, to pursue one good man through a life of useful study; or to observe the attempts made, however imperfectly, to rescue the mind from ignorance and superstition.

THIS reflection induced me to translate the Life of Petrarch, and the History of the Troubadours; which, placed in their chro-

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nological order with the following work, will include a comprehensive period of ancient customs and manners, and the rise and progress of knowledge that took place therein. To some, I am aware, the former may appear too remote to be of use, and in view to their prejudices concerning Chivalry, a childish object to attend to: yet let such consider (even allowing this to be the truth) that the prattle of an infant, though passed over by the careless and unconcerned, to the judicious and affectionate mind often announces noble dispositions and
a manly

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a manly character; and is delightful to behold, as the prognostic of future perfection.

IN one striking point of view, the ages of Chivalry do indeed bear a strong resemblance to children. Those who described them (which were chiefly the old romance writers) described simply what they saw; and have always been found in accord with historians of the greatest authenticity. Their principal object was, to represent the characters, duties, and humane offices of the noble lords
and

X P R E F A C E.

and ladies of the age in which they lived, and those who composed their courts, castles, and domains ; and they referred even sovereigns themselves to the awful tribunal of divine justice. In this light, they are as highly to be prized as the ancient poets so justly were, in the times of the Greeks and Romans : and if some authors had known, instead of having despised, the ancient romances, they would have wrote with more clearness of those ages. In truth, it is a great weakness to hold any work in contempt on account of its title, or because a
multitude

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multitude of trifling or bad productions bear the same; and was it not done by many, it should seem quite unnecessary to make the remark : for how much good sense, knowledge of character, and just satire on vice and folly, in nations and individuals, not suited to graver subjects, or if suited not attended to, would be lost, was this to become universal ?

THE romances of Astrea, Cyrus, Cleopatra, the Princess of Cleves, and Zayde, were wrote to paint the manners in the courts of Henry
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the Fourth, Lewis the Thirteenth, and Lewis the Fourteenth, as characteristic novels; and for their delicacy (though somewhat prolix) they are far from deserving the neglect they are fallen into.— It would be a reflection on the reader to name, as proofs, some established works of this kind, from Spanish, French, and English authors; or to dwell upon a late publication, which is no less surprising for the early period of life in which it was written, than for the justness of character (it being a picture of modern life) and the valuable sentiments,

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ments, enforced by a peculiar strength of language, through the whole.

PURSUED in their *just* measure, such studies are not only innocent, but might prove useful relaxations from the cares of life ; and very advantageous substitutes, in many social hours of leisure, for those late and dissipating amusements, which exhaust the spirits and the health, or waste the property, of individuals.

WITH respect to the romance writers referred to in this work, they have the testimony of so many
French

French writers of note, that I will only quote a few of them.—Le Laboureur says, “ The truth is recorded in these ancient romances, nor is aught exaggerated in them. The customs of the times, the order and ceremony of the tournaments, and the extreme submission and respect paid to the knights (inasmuch that they were never approached but with the lowest obeisance) are so faithfully drawn, that, however the study of the old romances may be censured by the ignorant, I must assert (adds he) that it would be a disgrace to a man of learning, not
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to have read them ; or having read, not to profit by them. They are in fact a portrait of the old times ; and are to be regarded as we do the remains of sculpture, the perfections of which we admire, without being offended at the want of drapery. These writers (continues he) who give the history of Chivalry and Knight-errantry, contain what I have not found in the historians of those times ; who, in their general relations, touch not on the customs and manners that were peculiar to them. To the old romances (concludes Le Laboureur) have I
been

been obliged to apply for the discovery of these things ; and from their copious fund of observation, the geographer, chronologer, antiquarian, and professor of heraldry, may draw the most curious and important details.”—Favin and Gallond declare, it is from this well we must draw the true knowledge of antiquity : “ for the historians seldom give themselves (add these writers) the trouble to transmit the particulars of ancient customs : they only mention them by the bye.—M. Chappellain,

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pellain, whose erudition is universally acknowledged, expresses the same sentiment, in a dialogue addressed to the Cardinal de Retz :—and M. Le Fevre determined to draw up a treatise on the ancient customs, in which his matter should be chiefly taken from the romance of Lancelot de Lac.

FURNISHED with such respectable authorities, there requires little apology for classing the ancient romance writers with the historians of those times : the source from whence they formed their romances, being the relations of the

b knights

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knights errant made on oath, the compositions of the heralds, and the recitals of the Troubadours: and nothing but disgrace could be gained by a misrepresentation of places, characters, customs, and manners well known.

LET us not, therefore, despise these works of antiquity, but revere them for the knowledge and the instructions their curious details afford us. Women, in particular, ought to hold these ancient writers in high esteem, for the deference they paid to modesty, and the fame they

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they so liberally bestowed on virtue. They taught generous firmness, judicious observance of superiors, and constant love, to unite in the same hearts: they taught to honour the valiant, to attend the wounded, to relieve the distressed, and to dispense the sweet solace of chearful and gentle manners to all around them: they taught them to respect themselves, and to prefer others; to be silent, observant, and industrious in youth, graceful and dignified in maturity, venerable in age, and lamented at death.

HAD I not been fully persuaded that the following Work was fruitful of instruction to all, but particularly to the youth of both sexes, I would not have undertaken the translation of it, or have been at the pains of interweaving the notes into the original : but these appeared to me peculiarly deserving of attention, as they are quotations from the ancient romances, and from a few of the old French historians, which are most of them very scarce, if at all to be procured in this kingdom.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

O F

ANCIENT CHIVALRY.

PART I.

*The condition and employment of the Page
and the Squire.*

CHIVALRY, considered as a dignity which gave the first rank in the military profession, conferred by peculiar ceremonies and a solemn oath, cannot be traced further back than the eleventh century ; though Charlemagne, and other kings of France, conferred it on their children, as did also, says Tacitus, the
B Germans.

Germans. However it may be viewed, in modern times, as a frivolous or pernicious establishment, it was nevertheless the work of an enlightened policy, and the glory of those nations among whom it flourished !

To give a just idea of its utility, it will be necessary to behold the knight from the cradle to the tomb ; to consider his education in youth, and his domestic and military services ; and to join, with a distinct view of his character, a description of the tournaments which fitted him for war : to observe the use made in the armies, of the valour, address, and experience of the knights who were thus trained ; the rewards promised to those who distinguished themselves in the combats and battles ; and the punishments with which they were threatened, if they failed in their duty : and, finally, to observe a strict impartiality, and take in the whole view of this subject, it will be expedient to examine the causes which produced the

decay and ruin of chivalry, and the inconveniencies which, in some degree, counterbalanced the advantages of this noble institution.

THE child who was destined to knight-hood, continued, till seven years of age, in the care of women; he was then taken from them, and put into the hands of a governor (as the emperor Julian observes of himself in his *Misopogon*) and by a robust and manly education, he was early prepared for the labour of war.

IN default of paternal assistance, the courts of princes and castles of the nobles were always open, in which the young nobility received their first lessons; and these castles were even religious hospitals, the lords of which furnished, with a generous abundance, all that was requisite to supply their wants. This was the only resource for the youth without dower, in these ages; for the power and liberality of sove-

reigns, equally limited, had not yet opened a more useful and noble way for those who would devote themselves to the defence and the honour of their state and their crown.

To be thus attached to some illustrious knight, had nothing in it degrading; it was only rendering benefit for benefit; and it must have been a refinement more subtle than noble-minded, that could have refused the gratefully paying to him, who generously took the place of a father, the services so justly his due as from a son.

If any should ascribe the origin of this benevolence to vanity, it must still be acknowledged, that even this vanity concurred to the public good, and was at least an imitation of virtue. The kind of independence which the first barons had enjoyed at the beginning of the third race of kings, their houses being composed of the same officers as that of the king, gave
a sort

a sort of title to their successors to imitate, in the pomp of what they called their courts, that splendour and magnificence which belonged only to royal dignity. The distinct privileges of some barons were, to have a marshal and a constable : and inferior lords, by the contagion common in all ages, of emulating the appearance of those above them, fought to aggrandize the state of their houses.

IN the eleventh century, the great lords were reproached with multiplying their domestic chapels, which abuse continued to the fourteenth century ; even common lawyers had their chaplains. In a castle and a monastery there were the same officers as in the court of a sovereign : when the abbot of St. Denys went into the country, he was accompanied by a chamberlain and a marshal, whose offices were erected into a fief.

THE first place given the young man to fill up, who emerged from the state of childhood, was that of a Page; a name sometimes given to the squires. Saintie Jouveneal, being then thirteen years of age, went from the palace of the lord of Priouille to the court of King John; where he was a page, and a child of honour, and was called sometimes a valet, and at others a squire. Inferior servants were stiled body pages, and sometimes only pages. According to Juvenal des Ursins, in his history of Charles the Sixth, "there were eight thousand knights and squires, servants and body pages without end."

THE employments of the young page, were to perform the service of a domestic about the persons of his master and mistress; he attended them to the chace, on their journies, their visits, and their walks; he carried their messages, and even waited on them at table, and poured out their drink.

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THE young chevalier Bayard was placed by his parents in the house of the bishop of Grenoble, his uncle, who brought him with him to the court of Savoy. The prelate being admitted to the table of the duke, during the dinner his nephew, the good chevalier Bayard, served him with drink in exact order, and demeaned himself with great *délicacy*. The protection of the great, their commendations, and the emulation this raised in the hearts of their pages, were sources of the courtesy and good-breeding of the knights.

THE first lessons given to the page, consisted principally in the love of God, and attachment and respect to the fair sex. They caused him early to make choice of one of the most noble, handsome, and virtuous ladies in the courts he frequented; and to her he was to refer all his sentiments, thoughts, and actions. The precepts of religion established, however, in the heart, a veneration for things sacred,

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which, sooner or later, had its effect ; and the precepts of love, spread over the commerce with the fair sex, that circumspection, that tender respect, and attention, which has never been effaced, but has always been the particular character of the French nation. Gallantry had even introduced into their epistolary commerce this concluding form, and the Queen of France used it in this sense to Saintie : “ I pray
“ God to give you joy of your lady, and
“ of all you desire.”—The instructions that the youth received, with respect to decency of manners, to conversation, and to virtue, were continually exemplified in the characters of the knight and the lady he served. In them were represented the models of those exterior graces so necessary in the commerce of the world.

THE generous care of the nobles to employ the youth who were unprovided for, turned out to their own advantage. It gave competitors, in these young men,
to

to their children, which excited in them a just emulation. The connexions thus formed by habit, a long union with each other in youth, and the double tie of benefits and gratitude succeeding, became indissoluble bonds in after life. Of this noble friendship, Saintie and Boucicout, who were brought up together in the domestic service of the king, were eminent examples. But what was considered of still more importance than all, was the teaching the pupil (and which indeed they were the most capable of teaching in this age) to respect the august and sacred character of Chivalry, and to revere, in the knights, the virtues that had raised them to this high dignity. By this means the services they rendered them were still greater in their esteem; and when they served a single knight, they paid as it were a tribute to the whole body of knight-hood.

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THE games, which made a part of the amusements of the pupil, contributed also to his instruction. The emulative disposition, natural to his age, led him to imitate what he beheld done by persons who were older than himself; and thus he formed an early taste for the different kinds of tournaments he was to engage in, that he might obtain the degree of squire, which was often the next step to knighthood. But before he passed from the condition of page to that of squire, religion had introduced a sort of ceremony, the design of which was to teach him the use he was to make of the sword, which for the first time was put into his hands. The young man, on his quitting the place of page, was presented to the altar by his father and mother, who each holding a lighted taper in their hands, attended the solemnity. The officiating priest took from the altar a sword and a girdle, on which he bestowed several benedictions, and then
fastening

fastening it to the side of the young man, from that time he constantly wore it.

THE courts and the castles were also excellent schools of courtesy, of politeness, and other virtues, for the young gentlewomen bred up with the pages and squires; they were herein instructed in the most essential duties they were to perform; those simple graces and tender sentiments, for which nature seemed to have formed them, were here cultivated in perfection. Courtesy towards persons in a low estate was strongly recommended, as well as respect to the great: the latter, they were taught, claimed it of right, and there was no virtue in shewing it to them; it was only a necessary propriety of character: but humility and tenderness to inferiors were testimonies of a good, frank, and gentle heart, and brought real glory to its possessor. The Chevalier de la Tour, in his Instructions to his Daughter, gives an example of this amiable deportment,

ment, in a noble lady whom he saw, in a great company of knights and ladies of high rank, who took off her hood to a common ironmonger, made him a courtesy, and rendered herself lowly before him: being reproached by some for this condescension, “ I would rather have failed in courtesy,” replied she, “ to an equal or superior, than be wanting in manners to an inferior.” The Chevalier de la Tour, in this treatise, advises his children, among other excellent instructions, to speak courteously, but not to talk or laugh too much; not to be absent or inattentive, lofty or bold; “ for no good can ensue from such manners,” adds he, “ in your future lives.”

THE young gentlewomen were taught also to anticipate in civility the knights who visited at the castles; to disarm them on their return from the tournaments and warlike expeditions; to provide them change of garments, and to serve them at table: the examples of which are so frequent,

frequent, as not to cause the least doubt of this custom; and it was agreeable to the spirit and the sentiment which was universal among women in this age: and to have those generous attentions and cares conferred by those with whom they were afterwards to form an alliance, was, as it were, the seal of knighthood. This also inspired women with fortitude: of which a Spanish lady gave a memorable proof; who disarming her husband, on his return from a tournament in which he came off victor, found a splinter of a lance remaining in his leg; “this splinter,” exclaimed she, “is his glory, and my pride!” Affection, and the desire of being the first to assist these knights, inspired this noble courage! They washed off the dust and blood with which they were covered; and they considered the doing this, as an honour peculiar to themselves. The ancient writers of romance relate only the truth, when they say, that the ladies and young gentlewomen knew how to give to the wounded all the necessary succour that a skilful

skilful and experienced hand was capable of bestowing: "My brave nephew," says one of the heroines, in the romance of Perceforest, "your arm seems to hang in a very uneasy posture." "By my faith, dear lady, and so it does," replied Norgul. "Will you be so good as to have it examined?"—Then the lady called her own daughter, who was named Helaine, who shewed great civility and tenderness to her cousin. Then looking at his arm, she found it out of its place, and she managed so well, that she put it in again. She then said, "My cousin, you may now go, for you are cured:" at which Norgul was marvelously joyous, and a thousand times he thanked his cousin, but he was in no hurry to take his departure.

THE young man, on emerging from the employment of a page, took on him that of a squire. To give a precise idea of the distinction between a knight and a squire, we must refer to the metaphorical use of the word squire in the French language.

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It is there transported to agriculture, to signify the sucker or young sprig which shoots from the vine: this young shoot would be a very just emblem of the new race destined to represent the precious stem from whence it arose, to re-produce and multiply the species. This word is also used by hunters with equal import to this subject, signifying the attachment and subordination of the squire to the knight, whose steps he follows every where, and observes his conduct, like the young stag, who follows with tenderness and constancy the old one.

THE squires were divided into different classes, according to the employment given them. The Body Squire, or he who had the care of the things relative to the person of the lady or the knight; the Squire of the Chamber, or the Chamberlain, to whose care was committed the gold and the silver of their masters: these officers, and the Constable, had the charge of

of the vessels of gold and silver used at the tables, and of delivering them out when wanted. The Gentleman Carver, who carved the meat for the guests; and the Gentleman Butler, who, with the Cup-bearer, poured out the wine. The most honourable of all these offices was that of the person called the Body Squire, or the Squire of Honour; he carried his master's standard, and gave the watch-word in battle. In less numerous families 'tis possible a single squire might be charged with several different employments.

THE education given by the bishops to the young scholars who were attached to them, caused the parallel made by ancient authors, of the prelacy with knighthood. The latter were the seminaries of the squires; the former of the young clergy, who held the places of readers and secretaries to the prelate, followed him every where, and delivered his letters and his orders. The squire, in his new dignity, approached still
nearer

nearer the persons of his lord and his lady, and became more assiduous in studying and cultivating their affection: he helped to dress and undress his lord, and always attended him, morning and evening, in his apartments.

It was his employment also to shew to the noble strangers, the knights, and the squires who came in their train, what was then called the Honours; a method of speaking still preserved, and which signifies, properly, all the ceremonies of a court, of assemblies, and festivals; in fine, he redoubled his attention to appear with all the advantages that it was possible to obtain from grace of person, a prepossessing address, a polite language, modesty, wisdom, and discretion in conversation; accompanied, however, with a noble ease and liberty of expression when occasion required it.

THE young squire had learnt a long time, by silent observation, the art of speaking well, when, in the inferior rank of carver, he stood at all the repasts and festivals, solely employed in cutting the meats with a suitable propriety, dexterity, and elegance, and having them distributed to the noble guests with whom he was surrounded.

JOINVILLE, in his youth, had filled up this office at the court of St. Louis. In the recital he makes of the great court and open house that St. Louis held at Saurmur, in Anjou, speaking of the new knights at the table of the king, he adds, "At another table before the king, eat the king of Navarre, who was dressed in cloth of gold, with a girdle, a clasp, and a helmet, all of fine gold; before whom I carved:—before St. Louis the king, the Count d'Artois and his brother served the meat, and the good Count of Soissons carved."—In the houses of sovereigns, this office was

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sometimes performed by their own children. The young Count de Foix carved at the table of Garston de Foix, his father, according to Froissart. "The Count de Foix seated himself at table in the hall, and Garston his son served him with all his meats, of which he tasted before he presented them."

THE squires had also the care of preparing the table; they brought in the meats appointed for each service, and took care of the pantry and the wine-cellar; they paid continual attention that nothing should be wanting to the inferior assistants; they gave to wash after the repast, took away the tables, and disposed every thing in its proper order for the assemblies, the balls, and the other amusements that succeeded, in which they bore a part, with the young gentlewomen who were in the train of noble ladies; after which they served the sweetmeats and sugar-plumbs, the claret, or liquor composed of

wine and honey; the piment, another mixture of spices, wine, and confections; also burnt wine and hippocras, which was a compound wine, esteemed very delicious. These, and other liquors, were always served at the end of these feasts, and continued to be taken while they were undressing for bed, and were called, 'the wine of repose;' an allusion to which is in the romance of Gerard de Rouffillon. "The tables being served, they sit down to eat; after eating they go out to amuse themselves in the great court; he who knows a song or a fable, sings or relates it, and the knights make a recital of their exploits and of their adventures; with which Gerard and his guests are delighted, till the cold of the night comes on; the Count then calls for wine, and goes to sleep: in the morning he rises with the day, and his squire helps to dress him." — The squires made also the beds, and accompanied the strangers to the chambers they had prepared for them, serving them with the
wine

wine of repose.—In ancient times, to give the wine of repose was a privilege attached to certain officers in the house of the king.

FROISSART, who has succeeded better than any of the French historians in painting the manners of his age, has given us, in the third volume of his history, a simple and faithful picture of the court of the Count de Foix, at which he had often been. After describing the feasts of this lord, “To sum up all,” adds he, “before I came to this court, I had been in many courts of kings, dukes, and princes, of counts and noble ladies; but I was never in any court that pleased me so well, nor where I beheld more joy and valour, than in this of the Count de Foix. In the halls, in the apartments, in the open courts, the knights and squires of honour passed and repassed, and discoursed of love and of arms. All honour was found here; intelligence from every country; there was no kingdom whatsoever from which news was not here ob-

C 3 tained;

tained; for from every part of the world they came to behold the worth and valour of the good Count de Foix."

FROM the offices of the house the squire passed to another, to which these introduced him, which demanded more strength and skill; and this was, the qualifying himself for huntsman, an office in high esteem; and the management of the horses; which could not but be a noble employment with a warlike nobility, who always fought on horseback.

THE Chevalier Bayard was placed, by the Duke of Savoy, in the hands of a squire of good trust, who had the charge of his conduct, to instruct him in this art. The squire was to keep the arms of his master bright as silver, and always ready for use at a moment's warning. All these different kinds of domestic services, in which the squire had proper assistants, were intermixed with the military service, nearly
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the same to that which is observed in time of war ; and there was one domestic, who at midnight always went his rounds by all the chambers, and through the courts of the castle. When the lord went into public, his squire walked his horses backward and forward in the pavilions and lists ; some held his stirrup, others carried the different pieces of his armour, his brasslets or arm-pieces, his gantlets, his helmet, his shield, his lancet, his sword, and his standard : as to his cuirass or breast-piece, that could no more be dispensed with in a knight, than the buckler in the Greek or Roman soldier. But when he went to ride only, he mounted a cropped, trained, ambling courser, of a reddish colour, and of an easy and commodious pace.

IN this age it was considered as degrading to use mares, and they were assigned to plebeians, and prudently reserved for the cultivation of the land, and the multiplication of the species. A good policy

was as much the foundation of this rule, as that of one of the kings of France; who, to suppress luxury, prohibited the wearing of golden ornaments to all women but those of bad lives. Perceforest, in his famous romance, descriptive of ancient manners, alludes to this custom: speaking of a knight in the field, “Behold and see! in the midst, a young mare so large and strong as if it was the war-horse of the king, and think whether this knight could intend it for his service! Certainly he could not do a thing so dishonourable; he must be a base and recreant knight if he does, and no knight of valour, or who loves his honour, will joust or try swords with him, any more than they would with a madman or a beggar.”

WAR-horses, which were of a peculiar size, were led in the march by squires on the right hand, as Perceforest relates: “Then came my Lord Gauvain, and two squires, one of whom led his courser on
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the right hand, and carried his sword, and the other his helmet and his shield. When he entered the forest, he met four squires, who led four white steeds on their right hand; and further, a page, who rode a strong horse, of a reddish colour, and led a black courser in his right hand." The squires gave these led horses to their masters when the enemy appeared, or when danger called him to the battle; and this was called, 'mounting the great horse,' a term still in use, as well as that of, 'a word and a blow,' taken from the fierce countenance with which the squire, who followed his lord to the fight, carried his helmet fixed on the pommel of his saddle. This, and all the other parts of his armour, were put on the knight by the different squires, who carried them with the nicest care and the most respectful attention; and thus they learnt to arm themselves for the safety of their persons when occasion required.

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THIS was an art which demanded much skill, and a particular dexterity; to fix and clasp the joints of the cuirass and the other pieces of armour; to settle exactly and to lace the helmet on the head; and above all, to close and clench together with the nicest evenness the visor or face-piece. The accident which happened to Henry the Second, who was wounded in the face in a single combat, which was the cause of his death, was probably owing to negligence in this point; and the success and safety of every combatant depended on the exactness with which he was armed.

THE officers charged with the helmet, lance, and sword, took them also when the knight put them off to enter into a church, or other sacred place, and on his entrance into the castles of the nobles, “Gerard de Rouffillon,” says Peter de Monrabey, “arriving at the castle of Rouffillon, enters it over the first bridge:
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the knights run to meet him in the piazza under the belfrey : he commits his sword to his squire, and then enters the church and prays." The custom of taking off the helmet on such occasions, possibly gave rise to that of uncovering the head, now in use in places and before persons of peculiar sacredness or dignity.

IMMEDIATELY when the knights had mounted their war-horses, and the engagement was begun, each squire, who on the march had preceded them on reddish horses, now drew back, and, ranged behind their masters, to whom they had given the sword, remained in some measure idle spectators of the combat. And this custom was suitable to the method in which the troops of cavalry were ranged in battle ; for fighting in squadrons was scarcely begun in France in the age of those great generals Montlue and La Noue, or, as they then expressed it, fighting in host. In vain did they represent the necessity of reforming the ancient custom. The advantage gained in the

the battle of Coutras, in 1587, by the troops of Henry the Fourth over those of Henry the Third, and those of Chatillon over the Leaguers, in 1589, in the battle of Bonneval, near Chartres, had more effect than the opinion of those great masters in the tactic art. “ Charles the Fifth was the first,” says La Noue, “ who formed his cavalry into squadrons or hosts ; and from that time the Spaniards, Italians, Germans, and Burgundians, have adopted this custom.”

DURING the combat, the squire, tho’ an idle spectator in one sense, was not so in another : in the terrible shock of the two lines of knights, who, with their lances bent, fell headlong on each other ; some, wounded or overthrown, rose up again, pulled out their swords, their axes, their clubs or maces, to defend and revenge themselves ; and others sought to profit from and take an advantage of their enemies who were overthrown. In these instances,

instances, each squire was attentive to every motion of his master ; the one to give him, in case of accident, new arms, to ward off the strokes aimed at him, to raise him up when he fell, and give him a new horse ; while the other seconded his master, by every means his skill, his valour, and his zeal could suggest, and aided him, though always within the strict bounds of the defensive, to profit from his advantages, and gain a compleat victory.

THIS custom was afterwards limited to kings, who alone had their attendant squires ; but was laid aside also with them, and did not subsist in the time of Brantome ; who thus speaks : “ I have heard the old captains say, that formerly, by an ancient rule in the battles, the first and noblest squires of the kings of France were accustomed to be always near them, and never quitted their side ; but they only warded off the blows levelled at their masters, nor employed themselves in
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aught besides: as did (say they) that brave and noble squire, St. Severin, at the battle of Pavia, who died at the side of king Francis, for his valiant deeds much honoured and praised by his king."

It was also to the squires that the knights confided, in the heat of the battle, the prisoners they took. This spectacle, which was a living lesson of address and courage, representing continually to the young warrior new methods of defence, and becoming superior to the enemy, gave him the means, at the same time, of proving his own valour, and of judging whether he was capable of sustaining so many labours and perils. Thus, a weak and inexperienced youth was not exposed to bear the heavy toil and burthen of war, without having learnt, long before, whether his strength and his talents were equal to such a charge.

BUT

BUT the squire passed not immediately from a peaceful service, to such perilous encounters. The courts and the castles were schools where the young warriors were formed, who were destined for the service and defence of the state; laborious games were here practised, in which the body acquired flexibility, agility, and the vigour so necessary in battle; running at the ring, courses of horses and of lances, prepared for those tournaments, which were only faint images of war.

THE account given by the historian of the life of Boucicout, proves how laborious those exercises were by which the youth, formed to fatigue and hardship, were prepared for war. “ Sometimes (says the historian, speaking of young Boucicout) he attempted to leap on a horse, armed from head to foot; at other times he ran as far and as fast as he could, to accustom himself to take long breath, and to suffer much fatigue; then he
would

would wield the ax in different ways, and strike the ball with the mallet. To inure himself to armour, and to accustom his arms to move easily under its weight, he made sudden jumps, armed with all his parts of armour, and danced in a coat of mail—vaulted, without setting his foot in the stirrup, on a courser, armed at all points—vaulted behind a warrior on his war-horse, only holding by the warrior's arm with one hand—placing one hand on the saddle-bow of a war-horse, and the other between his ears, he seized him by the mane, and vaulted over him as he moved along in the open field. If two walls of plaister were at six feet distance, the height of a tower, by strength and skill he would mount to the top of one, and leap to and come down the other, without slip or fall; also he would ascend a ladder set against the highest wall, without touching it with his feet, but leaping with two hands from one step to the other, armed with a coat of brass armour: and when he was at home,
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he attempted to throw the lance, or perform other arduous feats of war."

THIS recital may appear romantic to those who are not informed of the ancient customs; but to prove its reality, they need only have recourse to the Memoirs of Sully; where we see the account of the exercises in which Henry the Fourth was continually occupied; more than two centuries after the time of Boucicaut. While Henry lived, he kept up in his court the ancient spirit of Chivalry, by the model he presented continually, in his own conduct, to the eyes of his warriors.

WE see by this account, that those who aspired to knighthood were to unite in themselves, all the strength requisite to the most laborious trades, with all the genius and address proper for the most skilful arts, and the talents necessary for excelling in horsemanship and war. It is therefore the less surprising to behold the

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title of squire held in so much honour, that it has been given to the eldest son of one of the kings of France, as we learn from the letters of Charles the Eighth and his queens, and those of Monsieur and Madame de Beaujeau, in which they speak of the dauphin under the title of a squire.

ON these accounts it was, not without reason, they mistrusted paternal tendernefs, which would perhaps have softened too much such rigorous proofs of courage and labour in a domestic education: hence a knight was led to place his son in the house of another knight, superior to himself perhaps in valour, though not in rank, to learn the office of a squire, and to acquire the knowledge and vigour necessary to knighthood. It was from this motive Antoine de Chabanne was first admitted into the house of the Count de Ventadour, and afterwards into that of La Hire; and it was not till he came out of these schools

of war, that he was made commander in chief of the government of Creil-sur-Oise.

AN author, who had long borne arms, lived in the court, and seen Chivalry flourish in the reign of Charles the Fifth, lamenting its decay under Charles the Sixth, gives an account of the causes which contributed to its original splendor. “ The youth (says he) passed at first through the station of pursuivants, carrying the lance of the knights, learning to ride the great horse, and being introduced to the three professions of arms; that is, the frequenting the courts of the princes of their own nation—following the armies, from whence came the name of pursuivant at arms—and going, in time of peace, on voyages, or with messages, to distant countries, to acquire more experience in arms and in tournaments, and to discover the manners of foreign lands; from whence they learnt courtesy, the art of

D 2 defence,

defence, and tilting in particular, not superficially, but in the most perfect manner. To this end, they minutely observed every thing that passed, and had pocket-books, in which they wrote down the most remarkable feats and circumstances."

It cannot be doubted, but that the ladies who were spectators of the games of the young nobility, assisted at the exercises of the squires: but it appears that they did not, in the most ancient times, assist at the tournaments; yet at last, the terror of seeing bloodshed, gave way, in the hearts of this tender sex, to the sentiments of glory; they then repaired in crowds to the tournaments; and this, therefore, was the epocha of their celebrity and perfection.

THE evening before the tournament was celebrated, there was a kind of tilting, called 'essays on proof,' or 'vespers of the tournaments;'

tournaments ;' in which the most skilful squires attacked each other with lighter arms,—arms easier to manage than those of the knights ; easier to break, and less dangerous for those who were wounded with them. It is said, in the letter of Lewis the Twelfth, that “ in the tilting at the marriage of M. d'Alençon, the lances were small ones, on account of the young princes who were to tilt at this ceremony.”

THESE vespers, or evening essays, were the prelude of the grand spectacle, called ‘ the master tournament, the high and glorious day of the tournament ;’ in which the bravest and the most skilful knights were to exhibit the next day, before an innumerable multitude of spectators of all forts. Those of the squires who were the most signalized in the first tournaments, and who had carried off the prize, acquired, sometimes, the right to figure in the second among the illustrious order of

knights, obtaining hereby the honour of knighthood : but this mixture of knights and squires introduced at length many abuses in Chivalry, and caused it to degenerate ; the squires usurping, successively and by degrees, the honours and distinctions which belonged only to the knights.

EVERY kind of service rendered to a knight, might merit, from his kind acknowledgment, the favour of being armed by his hand with the badge of knighthood ; but the service done near his person, and in his house, in the station of squire, during a course of years, gave him the more certain right to hope for this reward. There was, however, sometimes, danger from serving some knights too well, who becoming more interested in the advantages they received, in their own persons, from their squires, than solicitous for their honour, continually deferred bestowing this mark of their favour, that they might not lose the value of their service.

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SOME authors have said, that the ladies had power to confer knighthood : and of this there is an instance in the history of Du Guesclin, that Jane de la Val, widow of the Constable, girded the sword her husband had worn on Andrew de la Val, afterwards marechal of France, when very young, and made him a knight : there is also an example, as will be seen, of a queen conferring this honour : but these are only singular instances, and do not prove the above observation.

THE prospect of this great honour impressed sentiments so noble and elevated, and gave rise to actions so daring and heroic, as almost to exceed the ideas of mere humanity ; and thus the squire was fully repaid for his services to his sovereign and to his country.

THE age of twenty-one, was that in which the youth, after so many proofs of valour, might be admitted to the honour

of knighthood. But this rule of being admitted to knighthood from such services, was not always observed in the case of every individual; birth giving to the princes of the blood in the French nation, and to all sovereigns, exclusive privileges of superiority. “The sons of the kings of France (says Monstrelet) are knights at the font of baptism, being regarded as the chiefs of knighthood; they receive, from the cradle, the sword, which is to be the sign thereof; and it is in conformity with this idea they are invested, as soon as they are born, with the ribbon of the order of the Holy Ghost.

THE queen of Charles the Fifth being brought to bed, in 1371, of a second son, who was afterwards Duke of Orleans, the Constable Guesclin, his second godfather, immediately after the ceremony of baptism, drew his sword, and putting it quite naked into the hand of the little child, who was also naked, said to him—

“ My

“ My lord, I give you this sword, and
 “ I put it into your hand; and I pray God
 “ to give you so good and valiant a heart,
 “ that you may prove as worthy and re-
 “ doubted a knight, as was the king of
 “ France, who wore this sword.”

“ THE child also of whom the Duchess of Burgundy lay-in, was made a knight (says Monstrelet) at the font, and named Charles by his father, who created him Count de Charolois.” “ Charles the Fifth, the grandson of this Charles, was only a year and a half old when he received the order of the Fleece,” says Brantome; and Francis the First made his grandson, the son of Henry the Second, knight at the font. In like manner the Chevalier Bayard, when at Moulins, visited the Duke of Bourbon, who honoured and caressed him, and besought him to make his eldest son a knight, who was yet in his nurse’s and governess’s care; saying, “ It was the greatest honour that his son could receive

receive in the world; and that it would be an augury of good fortune to his future life." The Chevalier Bayard very willingly granted what the Duke desired.

It was not only to the sons of princes, or on some peculiar occasions, that knight-hood was obtained before the age of twenty-one, prescribed by the ancient laws; a peculiar degree of merit and genius in attaining the necessary qualifications, often gained this prize in early life; as was the case of Vidame de Chartres, who received it very young by order of the king; as did Foulques, Count of Anjou, at seventeen, from his uncle Geoffrey. The regular age was, however, twenty-one; for though the minority of the nobles ended at seventeen, because they were then judged strong enough, and sufficiently qualified, for the culture of their lands, the mechanic arts, and commerce, in which they were all employed; yet the profession of arms demanded an ability
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and strength, not to be acquired till the age of twenty-one; and this extended to those nobles whose only profession was a military life: their majority was fixed at that age, as well as the obligation to accept a duel, and the admission to knighthood. Some squires deferred accepting this honour, that it might be conferred by some knight at a distance; others, till they had warred against the infidels; and some who were of age, deferred the obtaining knighthood, from the great expences it drew on them, and the obligations contracted by the solemn oath they were then to take.

WE will now pause a moment, and then proceed to the creation of our knight, and to the august ceremony of the tournament.

P A R T II.

*Of the creation of the Knight, and grand
spectacle of the Tournament.*

HA V I N G viewed the young man in the stations of Page and Squire, we will now accompany him to the glorious prize of Knighthood he is on the point of obtaining in the Tournament. But first, it will be proper to remark, the rank he holds in the military service, the power it gives him of conferring knighthood on others, and the magnificence of the feasts at which the august ceremony of Knighthood is celebrated.

THE rank of a knight in battle gave him the same pre-eminence as that of a doctor in science. An ancient French manuscript

manuscript says, "both lords and laws a knight precedes:" But the real state of a knight, was the command of a thousand men; each knight had this number under him, according to Eustache Deschamps—

*"The knight is chosen among a thousand
as the best."*

And in the Provençal manuscript of Gerard de Rouffillon, King Charles concludes his lamentation on the ingratitude of a knight, in these terms: "Thus hath he treated me, who have brought him up from childhood, till he was in a situation to have a thousand men under his command."

It was in the eleventh century the kingdom of France was released from the troubles into which it had been plunged, after the extinction of the second race of its kings. The royal authority began then to be respected; statutes were
formed;

formed ; laws for citizens and the common people were instituted ; and the fiefs acquired a more regular form and order from the nature of that investiture, acknowledged in the ceremonies and homage of Chivalry: “ Its origin (says Le Laboureur) appears to take its rise in these fiefs.” From political views of the sovereigns, and of the higher barons, they wished, no doubt, to bind faster the bonds of feodality, by adding to the ceremony of homage, that of giving arms to their young vassals in the first expeditions to which they should lead them ; and perhaps afterwards, by conferring these arms on other persons, who offered to serve them from affection, or the pure desire of glory, they might acquire new warriors, who should be ready to follow them on every occasion, not like the feudatories, for a limited portion of time. As every knight had the right of making knights, they saw, without jealousy, their lord paramount make use of the power, in the honour of which
they

they participated. It is said, in the chronicle of St. Denys, that Philip, the son of Philip le Bel, king of France, having, at the feast of Pentecost, made his three sons, Lewis, Philip, and Charles, knights, these princes conferred this honour on four hundred knights : and Malcolm king of Scotland, who accompanied Henry king of England to the siege of Thoulouse, being made a knight by that prince, created on the spot thirty other knights.

THERE were stronger inducements to be armed a knight, than the serving a sief :—The obtaining this honour from the hands of a prince or great lord—the noble feasts given by the lords to the knights and to their guests, at many of which, particularly at the full court held at Rimini, to arm the lords of the house of Malatesta, so great was the splendor, that they counted fifteen hundred comedians and mountebanks assembled there—the distribution which was made of robes, of
favours,

favours, of costly furs, of rich and precious stuffs, of sumptuous mantles, which, lined with these costly furs, were reserved solely for the knights—the arms, the jewels, and the presents of every kind, without excepting either gold or silver, which were bestowed in profusion, and the expence of which, vast as it appears, was entirely defrayed by the lord who made the feast—in fine, the desire of appearing worthy of being thus signalized—were more powerful motives to these new-created knights, than the obligation exacted from those of feudatory rank.

As many writers find a resemblance between the forms of knighthood and those of feudal investiture; so all agree in the similitude between the former and the ceremonies of the church in the administration of the sacraments. In the former, the white habit and the bath, answered to the forms of baptism: the stroke on the neck, and the embrace given on
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being made a knight, to the forms used in confirmation : and the word ‘ espouse,’ which some have used to express the dubbing or arming a knight, and the kiss given him when armed, was the indication of marriage. Chivalry was indeed considered as a sacred ordination and a sacerdotal engagement; and the knight who entered this order from any temporal view, was judged guilty of simony.

As the godfather made presents to the child whom he held at the font ; so the lord or knight who conferred knighthood, was to present some distinct gift, and to grant some peculiar favour, to the knight he created. This was the custom, says Lancelot de Lac ; accordingly the knight whom Galead had just armed, prayed him to grant to his request, the first favour he should ask ; which, in the like case, is never refused, if the petition is not unreasonable for the giver, or prejudicial to the receiver. Galead promised to comply ; and the young knight besought he would permit him to

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be of his train in the expedition on which he was going.

SOME authors have so entirely united the priesthood and knighthood, as to mention, that celibacy was as essential to knights as to priests. For their justification it may be observed, that, carried away by a pious zeal, they thought they could not too much exalt an order, to which the preservation of the Christian faith was confided, and which was calculated to procure such glorious advantages from the defenders of it, to religion, to the state, and to society.

WE will now proceed to the preliminary ceremonies which prepared the knight for the sacred sword of Chivalry. Austere fasts ; whole nights passed in prayers with a priest and godfather, in the churches or chapels ; the sacraments of penance, confession, and of the eucharist, received with the utmost devotion ; bathings, which
signified

signified the purity of manners necessary in the state of Chivalry; and white habits, in imitation of the neophytes, or new converts, as another symbol of the same purity (and this was a custom formerly used by the kings and queens of Great-Britain, on the evening of their coronation); a sincere acknowledgment of all the faults of his life; a serious attention to sermons, in which were explained the principal articles of faith, and of Christian morals:—all these duties of preparation were to be performed, in the most devout manner, by the young man previous to his being armed.

THE pious custom of passing whole nights in prayer (which was called ‘the vigil of arms,’) had been observed, from the remotest times, in judiciary duels, or duels of proof. Ademar de Chabannois speaks of a combat of this sort, in his Latin chronicle—“The victorious champion having received no wound, went on

foot immediately, to return thanks to God at the tomb of St. Cebat, where he had watched the preceding night." And in the order of Chivalry it is said—"When the good knight receives the naked sword, he kisses the cross as he receives it; by some this is done at the holy sepulchre, for the love and honour of our Lord; by others, at the tomb of St. Catharine, or at other holy places of devotion. The young man then bathes; after which, clothed in white apparel, he is to watch all night in the church, and remain there in prayer till after the celebration of high mass. The communion being then received, the young man, with his hands joined and held up towards heaven, to which also his eyes were solemnly directed, after the priest celebrating mass had passed the sword over his neck and blessed it, went and knelt at the feet of the lord who was to arm him. The lord asked him, 'with what intent he desired to enter into that sacred order, and if his
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views tended only to the maintenance and the honour of religion and of knight-hood?' The young man made a suitable reply; and the lord, after having received his oath, gave him the dubbing, or three strokes on the neck with the flat end of the sword, and girded on him the golden sword. This august scene passed sometimes in a hall, or in the court of a palace or a castle, or, in time of war, in the open field."

THE desire of riches, of repose, and of being honoured, were esteemed not only insufficient, but unworthy motives in this sacred engagement. The squire who was vain-glorious, or a flatterer, was also excluded; for such foment those corruptions, which the knight is engaged to root out and destroy. Nor were any to be admitted into this order, who were lame, or who had any other corporal defect or weakness, which should render him unqualified for the profession of arms, however rich,

noble, or courageous he might otherwise be. The figure, air, and physiognomy, were considered as of great import; and that strength of constitution that should enable the knight to exert himself, with ardour, for the maintenance of good order, wherever he was stationed, by a laborious attention to, and expertness in all the works relative to war: he was also enjoined, on immediate notice from his prince, to be ready to go forth to punish or appease the discords of the people. Agreeable to this, Perceforest relates, that king Peleon, when he armed his sons and his nephews knights, spake thus to them; “Whoever will enter into any sacred order, whether that of religion, of marriage, or of knighthood, ought first to purge his conscience, and cleanse his heart from every vice, and fill and adorn it with every virtue; and charge himself with the greatest care to accomplish every thing he is commanded to do in the profession he takes

takes upon him : in one word, he must be without reproach."

WHEN the Duke of Burgundy, says Monstrelet, held the feast of the Golden Fleece, the Duke of Alençon got a knight to assist at it in his place, being himself a prisoner, from a decree given against him ; and though at this assembly there ought to have been no knights, or proxies for knights, but such as were without reproach, the Duke of Burgundy suffered it, because he believed the Duke of Alençon a man of honour, unjustly condemned, and to whose condemnation he had not given his consent. Several knights have merited this noble distinction, that they were without reproach ; such as Du Guesclin, Barbasan, Louis de la Trimouille, Bayard, and the brave Chevalier d'Aumont, who died in 1595 ; to whom M. de Thou renders this glorious testimony : " He was so highly esteemed in the parties both of the king and of the league,

that if it had been now a question to find a knight without reproach, as it was in the days of our forefathers, all the world would have cast their eyes on the brave and virtuous Aumont."

THE ladies and young gentlewomen sometimes assisted at the arming of a knight. "A knight going to the combat (says Don Flores of Greece) was armed by a young lady, who with her delicate hands fastened and laced on his armour; you may guess how patiently he demeaned himself in receiving this signal favour from her, in whom his life was wrapped up."

THE manner of arming was, first to put on the spurs, then the coat of mail, the cuirass, the brassets, and the gantelets; and then the lord or knight gave the dubbing, and girded on the sword, in the manner above related; the last was the
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most honourable badge of Chivalry, and a symbol of the labour the knight was to encounter. As the young Lancelot had been forgotten among the great number who received the sword from the hand of king Artus, the Queen bestowed one on him, and he then became a knight, and the champion of that princess. The lord or knight, on the girding on of the sword, pronounced these words, or some that were similar:—"In the name of God, of St. Michael, and St. George, I make thee knight;" to which were sometimes added, "be brave, hardy, and loyal." Saintre going to combat against the infidels in Prussia, prayed the king of Bohemia to grant him knighthood in the name of God, our Lady, and my Lord of St. Denys. There was yet wanting, to complete the equipage of a knight, the helmet, the shield, and the lance; which they gave him: then they brought a horse, which he mounted often without
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the help of a stirrup. To shew off his new dignity and skill, he curveted round, darting his lance, and brandishing his glistering sword; soon after which he paraded, in the same equipage, in one of the public squares, that it might be known to all he was made a knight according to the order of Chivalry: and to inspire him with a higher sense of the character he was about to sustain, and a dread of committing any evil that should sully and disgrace it, he was to make a circuit round the city, and shew himself to the people as their guardian and defender.

PERCEFOREST gives a striking picture of a young man, whom the king Alexander had just made a knight, and who was then left alone at the entrance of a forest. "He looked up and down, and thought within himself, "It is a fine thing to be made a knight!" and he curveted his horse, stretched out his stirrup, closed his shield to his side, and fought to be familiar

familiar with his new arms ; he then takes out his sword, and begins to turn it round and round, and point it as in a fencing-bout, or trial of skill, fetching a compass as at a tournament, and saying to himself, “ Now my joy would be compleat, if I could but find one to tilt with, that I might see if I could bear proof.” After this he boldly spurs his horse, and bounds round the forest so joyous, and so ardently desirous of a joust, that if he had not feared he should shiver his lance in pieces, he would have tilted at the first tree he came to : and thus circuited he the forest till the time of the evening vespers.” And in another place, “ As soon as the king had made them knights they mounted, all armed as they were, on their horses, their shields pendent from their necks, and their swords grasped in their hands. In this manner they spurred their horses round the meadow so cleverly and briskly, that the king, and Cassiel the sultan, and the knights who were present, declared,

none could shew themselves more expert in feats of arms.

CHIVALRY was one of the three orders belonging to the state. According to Jouvencal, "the knight was to the body politic, what the arms are to the human body:—the church," says he, "is the head of the man; Chivalry is her arms; and the citizens, merchants, and labourers, are his inferior members:—the arms," says he, "are placed in the middle, to render them equally capable of defending the head or the church, from whom they derive their power, and the inferior members, (whose judges they also are by the administration of justice) and who contribute to their nourishment."

It appears, that the creation of a knight was at the same time celebrated by the acclamations of the people; who eagerly fought, by leaping and dances formed around him, to express the joy they felt at the

the acquisition of a new benefactor: and at the creation of several knights together, they possibly united to caracole in measure, and to mix their dances with those of the people who surrounded them; and this might be the origin of those festivals or ballets on horseback, of which there are some examples in the history of France, and which were danced at the court, in the time of Brantome and of Bassompierre, who give a very minute account of these festivals or ballets, as danced before Henry the Fourth.—All these ceremonies, accompanied with prayers and forms, which are still to be found in the ancient rituals of France, though they were subject, at different periods, to augmentations and retrenchments, yet evidently shew what idea was attached to the institution of a knight, and what means they employed to make him feel the extent and the sanctity of his engagement; which he could never violate without rendering himself guilty of perjury and sacrilege.

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It may be presumed also, of the piety of the ancient knights, that they silently renewed their vow at the great feasts, perhaps whenever they went to mass; and that standing up when the gospel was read or sung, they took the sword into their hand, and held it with the point upward, to mark the continual disposition they were in to defend the faith. It is, without doubt, from this ceremony, that the emperors, at certain feasts, held their naked swords in their hands while they sung the gospel; and this pious custom still subsists among the Polish gentlemen.

INDEPENDENT of the defence of religion, its temples, and its ministers, to which the knights devoted even life itself, the other laws of Chivalry contained in the oath of reception, might have been adopted by the wisest legislators, and the greatest philosophers of every age and nation. In virtue of these laws, widows, orphans, and all those of either sex that were powerless,

erless, ill at ease, and groaning under oppression and injustice, had a right to claim the protection of a knight, and to exact for their defence, not only the succour of his arm, but the sacrifice of his life. And to shrink from this obligation, was to fail in paying the most sacred debt; it was to incur dishonour for the rest of his days.

OF all the laws of Chivalry, none was maintained with such vigour among the French nobility, as regard to women; they had peculiar privileges granted them. Without arms to maintain themselves in the possession of their estates, destitute of the means to prove their innocence if attacked, they would have been often distressed witnesses of their fortune and their lands becoming the prey of a neighbouring unjust and tyrannical lord, or their reputation sinking under the load of calumny, if the knights had not been always ready to arm in their defence. It was even a capital point of
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their institution, never to censure any lady themselves, nor to suffer any to be guilty of such an offence in their presence. "If an honest and virtuous lady," says Brantome, "will maintain her firmness and constancy, her servant must not even spare his life to protect and defend her, if she runs the least risk either of her fortune or honour, or of any censorious word: thus have I seen in our court, several who have silenced with a word the back-biter of their ladies and mistresses: and so it becometh us to do, for we are bound, by the laws of Chivalry, to be the champion of their afflictions." This right of the ladies was, however, to be conditional, and supposed that their conduct did not render them, in any degree or point of reputation, unworthy of that association which united them to an order solely founded on honour. "A princess," says Tirant le Blanc, "declares, that she submits to lose all right to the benefits of Chivalry, and consents, that never any knight

knight should take arms in her defence, if she keeps not the promise of marriage she has given to the knight who adored her." And this union of fame between the knights and the ladies, was a new bond on the latter to preserve, with the most precious care, those pure and worthy dispositions, and that refinement of manners, which the knights exacted scrupulously from them; and this was a solid advantage that Chivalry conferred on society. A young gentlewoman, whose defence was undertaken by Gerard de Nevers, beholding the ardour with which he engaged in it, took off her glove of waiting, and delivered it to Gerard, (who very willingly received it) saying to him, " Sir, my person, my life, my lands, and my honour, I deposit in the care of God and of you; to whom I pray God to give such assistance and grace, that I may be delivered from this peril."

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IF negligence in acquitting himself of the duty he owed to oppressed or offended individuals, was of itself a sufficient reproach, with what infamy must the knight be overwhelmed, if he failed to exert himself in war with the energy due to his prince and his country? Born a judge, by his condition of knight, of all his peers, that is to say, of all those who in the rank of fiefs were his equals; and superior judge of his vassals; he would not be more dishonoured in his tribunal, by judgments against the laws of equity, than in the field of battle, by actions contrary to the laws of war. In the description of Foulque, nephew of Gerard, is summed up all the qualities of an accomplished, brave, and virtuous knight: "He is," says Gerard, "courageous, affable, frank, gentle, and eloquent; he is equally skilled in hunting in woods and in rivers (meaning the exercises of falconry, fishing, and pursuing beasts of prey or game); he is expert in playing at
chess

chess, draughts, and dice; he is eager to expand his heart, and to diffuse his wealth, to all who approach him; and even, without partiality or limitation, to all the world!—the declared enemy of injustice, and of all who dare to be its patrons. The being unable to redress wrongs, is his sole cause of grief: if this ever happens, he is inconsolable; nor will he ever put an end to his court, till he has confirmed the equity of his private judgments in the public lists.”

IN a dispute between three Troubadours, it was considered, whether the qualities of equity, generosity, and valour, must be given each distinctly to a different knight, or combined. The result was, that, to form a perfect knight, all the tender offices of humanity should be united to the greatest valour, and the soft emotions of pity and generosity to the afflicted, associated with the strictest justice and integrity of heart.—To sum up all, the knight must be a judge of his feudatories, a protector of his vassals, a

defender of the oppressed, and a father of the inhabitants who live in his domains, and of whom he is the liege lord.

No other *human* laws inforced, as Chivalry did, sweetness and modesty of temper, and that politeness which the word *courtesy* was meant perfectly to express. Such is to be the modesty of the knight, that he is to ascribe every thing to the hand of God, and praise him alone, for the noble acts he is enabled to perform; vain-glory and high conceit of any deed, is considered as a vice which extinguishes the merit of the knight, and renders him unworthy the rewards and benefits of Chivalry. Agreeable to these principles, king Artus, in his instructions to his knights, speaks thus to them: “ I call to mind what a hermit said to me on a time, to chastise my vanity. ‘ If you had as many kingdoms as king Alexander, as much sense as the wise Solomon, and as exalted valour as the brave Hector of Troy; pride alone, if that reigns in you, will ruin all.’ Guard against this vice, which brings

Guard

with it a whole legion of vices in its train !”

NOR did any other human law insist, with so much force as that of Chivalry, on the necessity of inviolable adherence to truth, and horror of deceit and lies. Adherence to their word was the hereditary virtue of the French, and was anciently esteemed the most honourable part of their character, even in the judgment of the Romans their enemies : and Tacitus thus celebrates the fidelity, as well as the bravery, of the Germans, their ancestors : “ No nation exceeds the Germans in valour and in truth.” And this eulogy ought not to be suspected, in a writer who reproaches them, in another place, with their excessive love of play. “ Even without having drunk, strange as it appears, they make a serious occupation of the game of dice, and give themselves up to it with so much fury, that after having gamed away all they

have, they finish by staking themselves : in one single throw they risk their person and liberty ; and he who loses, suffers himself to be bound, and sold for a slave : though younger and stronger perhaps than his antagonist, he embraces destruction, saying, “ I *must* keep the promise I have made ; ” — to such a pitch did they carry this virtue of integrity, in the midst of that insatiable passion for gaming, which brought on their ruin.

IN the examples and precepts of the antient Roman writers, truth is every where recommended. “ King Artus,” says Lancelot de Lac, “ having given his word to a knight, to make him a present of the queen his wife, would neither listen to the lamentations of this princess, nor to any representations that could be made him ; he only replied, ‘ I have promised, and a king cannot go from his word : whoever will be a king, let him be an honest man.’ The queen was accordingly delivered

delivered to the knight, to acquit the king of the promise he had given."

AN oath given in the name of a knight, was, of all oaths, the most inviolable. The knights taken in war, engaged to come, of their own accord, to prison, whenever it should be required; and on their word of honour, they were readily allowed liberty for the time they asked it. No one doubted their fulfilling their engagements, as punctual as Regulus fulfilled his; or believed that any pain or distress would intimidate them, where their oath was concerned. And sovereigns considered themselves to be as strictly bound by the oath of knighthood, as if they had sworn by their crown, which they held indeed from Chivalry. "Duke Jehan, of Bretagne, having treated of peace with king Charles the Sixth, swore to the observance of the treaty, by the faith of his body and the loyalty of his knighthood." But there cannot be a more perfect view

of their fidelity, than in the example related by Joinville, in the recital of the misfortunes which befel the Christian army, and the imprisonment of St. Louis the king. “Deplorable,” says he, “was the condition to which the queen his wife was reduced: informed of her misfortunes, given up to despair, and to such terrifying ideas as would not suffer her to close her eyes, and expecting every moment would bring on her the pangs of child-birth. In this dreadful situation, when she was on the point of falling alive into the hands of the infidels, she takes her last resolve; she throws herself at the feet of an ancient knight, aged above fourscore years, and conjures him, on his word, to grant her one request. The old man promises, and plights to her his oath. ‘Cut off my head then,’ said she, ‘before the Saracens can seize my person, if they should become masters of this city of Damiette, in which I am now shut up.’ The reply of the knight is a proof of the obligation

obligation by which, in Chivalry, he was bound to preserve female honour in every situation, even with the loss of life. ‘Very willingly will I perform your request,’ he replied, ‘which I thought indeed to have done of myself, if the case should so require it.’

IF such care of the reputation of ladies in general, and in public cases, was observed, it was the most capital crime against the oath of knighthood, to attempt the honour of any lady or mistress in private and social life; and if such attempt was made by a knight on the wife of his lord, it was irremissible: and if a knight was even informed that the conduct of a lady was reproachable, he was to make it known to his lord; and he was esteemed criminal himself, if he concealed it from him. Aggravain discovered to king Artus, the wrong done to this prince by Lancelot the squire, whom his queen loved; and Mordrec adds to
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what Aggravain had said, “ Sir knight, we have concealed it from you as long as we could, but at last it was necessary the truth should be made known; and by so long concealing it we are perjured; we therefore free ourselves from this perjury, and tell you plainly, that as we have said, so indeed it is.”

IN the Colombiere are to be seen the twenty-six articles of the oath taken by the knights; among which is to be remarked particularly, that which obliged them, at the return from their expeditions, to give an exact and faithful account of all the adventures, successful or unfortunate, honourable or degrading, they had met with; which were all to be inserted in the relations of the heralds or officers at arms. The recital of their success animated the courage of the other knights; the account of their humiliation consoled in idea, those who might fear to experience the same fate, and taught them never

to encourage despair. It was a means also of maintaining and improving, in the hearts and minds of these knights, the love of truth, the only solid basis of every virtue.

If this love of truth has not descended to the French nation in later times, with all the purity of the golden age of knight-hood, it has produced at least such a disdain for those who infringe it, that the Lie has been always considered as the most fatal and irreparable affront that a man of honour could receive. And this love of truth is not perhaps the only trace of virtue that Chivalry has left in the manners and customs of that nation : it would have been happy, if they had not carried this, and other virtues, to a pernicious excess of delicacy and punctilio, which, in their origin, had those great objects solely in view, the public good, and the service of their king. From the precepts included in the oath of Chivalry, branch forth all those

morals

morals spread throughout the works of the ancient French poets and romance writers. In a very ancient manuscript, called, *The Romance of the Wings*, the poet feigns, ‘ That the prowess of the knight is borne upon two wings, which are essential to his fame, and without which he cannot extend his flight, and nobly soar on high. These two wings are *Liberality* and *Courtesy*; each is adorned with seven plumes, which are the signs of the different conditions or modifications of these virtues, as essential as prowess itself to the reputation of a good knight. Chivalry (adds the poet) is the fountain of all goodness, and it can never be exhausted; from God it comes, and the knights over whom it flows from head to foot, are its sole possessors; they hold those springs in fief, which water and fertilize the rest of the world.’

BUT the poets and romance writers, *who were the echos of the historians*, were not
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the only testimonies in the praise of knighthood: the Bishop of Auxerre, an illustrious prelate, in the holy place, in presence of all the court, having officiated pontifically at the obsequies that Charles the Sixth made for the brave Du Guesclin, nine years after the death of this constable; in the funeral oration on this hero, represents the duties of a true knight, in which are the following lines, in the relation preserved by the monk of St. Denys, the most authentic historian of the reign of Charles the Sixth.—“ The Bishop took for his theme or text, ‘ His fame is gone abroad through all the earth!’ And he shewed, by the recital of his great exploits in arms and in war, by his trophies and his triumphs, that Du Guesclin was the most perfect image of knighthood; and that the title of the ‘ truly brave,’ was given only to those who, like him, had been equally signalized in valour and in probity. He passed from thence to the qualities of a true knight; and

and shewed, by its origin and institution, that Chivalry was not more necessary for the defence, than the political government of the state, and that it was an order that obliged to great duties, as well to the king as to the public. He then exhorted all the knights present to serve their sovereign with perfect submission; and declared, that it was only by his order, and for his service, they were to take up arms; and that there was as much virtue and honour required, as valour and experience, to merit, in their profession, the grace of God and the esteem of men."—The primitive discipline of ancient Chivalry was, however, greatly relaxed at this time; nor were the wisest regulations capable of stopping the progress of this corruption.

THE desire of raising Chivalry to its former state, was the origin of the order of knights of the Star, created by King John in 1351: "After God (says he) it was to
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the virtue and valour, the unanimity and fidelity of the ancient knights, that the former kings, my predecessors, owed their triumphs over their enemies;—who in the crusades, as it were by a miracle, brought over a prodigious number of infidels to the Catholic faith, and who restored a sinking state to peace and tranquillity, in which it long after continued.” But the inaction and luxury of pacific times, and the interruption and neglect of military exercises, caused the decay of Chivalry; the knights gave themselves up to supineness and ease, and forgetting the care of their honour and reputation, sought only their private interest.

KING John, by this new foundation, established in the church of St. Ouin, sought to detach the knights from frivolous occupations, and to revive that happy concord, so fruitful of advantages to them, and the basis of their fame and triumph: thus he hoped to restore the honour and splendour

splendour of ancient Chivalry. But these efforts of the king, though they were continued by his son Charles the Fifth, could not prevent its declining; and the historian of St. Denys, after a curious recital of the knighthood conferred by Charles the Sixth, at St. Denys, in 1389, on the young King of Sicily and the Count of Maine, refers to this when he says—“these princes, who were brothers, appeared to celebrate the vigil of arms in habits as modest as uncommon, that they might preserve the ancient customs of the noviciates in Chivalry, which obliged them to appear in the simple dress of squires:” and then, giving an account of their equipage—“all this (adds he) appeared extraordinary to many, because few there were who knew that this simplicity of induction was indispensable in the ancient ceremonies of knighthood.”

By these laws, as the knight was obliged to be most exact in his manners and conduct
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towards women; so those ladies who wished to be respected, were obliged to respect themselves, being then sure they would never fail in receiving the regard that was their due; but if, by an opposite conduct, they gave cause for just reproach, they had all the reason in the world to fear they should meet with knights who would take a diligent cognizance of their offences. The Chevalier de la Tour, in an address on education to his daughters, towards the year 1371, in Charles the Fifth's reign, makes mention of a knight of his time, who passing by a castle marked with signs of infamy, as the mansion of those ladies who were not worthy to receive loyal knights according to the laws of honour and virtue, from which they had miserably departed, gives the just eulogy to those who merit the public esteem:—

“ It was now (says he) a time of peace, and there were great feasting and rejoicings continually; and all orders of knights, of ladies, and young gentlewomen,

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affembled at these entertainments; and here the good knights of this time were in great honour. But if it chanced that any lady or gentlewoman of bad fame or slender honour, seated herself near a good lady or a young gentlewoman of fair renown, though she was the genteelest, or the most noble, or the richest lady, either by lineage or marriage, these good knights thought it no ill manners to make use of their authority on this occasion: they took the good lady and set her above the bad, saying to the latter before all the assembly, — ‘ Lady, let it not displease you that this lady, or this gentlewoman, is placed before you; for though she is not noble or rich as you are, she is innocent, and is therefore exalted to the rank of the good; but this say they not of you, which it grieves me to find true; wonder not, therefore, at this distinction, for honour must be given, where honour is deserved.’ Thus spake the good knight, and placed the worthy and exalted in
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same in the highest place; at which she *humbly* rejoiced, and thanked God that she had preserved a pure heart, and been held worthy of honour: and the other put her hands before her face, held down her head, and suffered great shame: and this was a good example to all gentle ladies; for from the reproach that followed to the bad, they the more feared to do ill themselves. Some ladies have said on hearing this (adds the Chevalier) ‘that, thank God! in these times, whether ladies are good or bad, it is all the same thing; and that the defamed are as much honoured as the worthy:’ but it is not so; for though in their presence some in this age may shew civility to such, yet when out of sight, they are jeered at and reviled: but I think this is ill done, and that it would be more honest to shew them their faults openly, as they did in the times I have spoken of. The same knight (adds the Chevalier) who watched over the general polity with so much strictness, having

perceived a young nobleman in an assembly, who by his absurd and unseemly dress, would have been taken for a jongleur or minstrel, obliged him to go back and get other cloaths more suitable to his birth and condition : so great was the authority conferred by the title of knight. And I have heard several persons say, that they saw the said knight Geoffrey, who told them, that when he rode about the country, and saw the castle or manor of any lady, he always enquired whose it was ; and when they told him it belonged to such or such a lady, if her character was blameable in point of honour, he would sooner have gone half a league round, than enter the threshold of her door ; but he took out a small cross which he wore, and marked the door with a signet of infamy, and then turned his horse away from it. On the contrary, when he passed the mansion of a lady or young gentlewoman of fair renown, if he was not in too great haste, he came to see,

see, gave her a chearful salutation, and said to her, ‘ My good friend, or my good lady, I pray God that he will ever maintain you in this wealth and this honour, among the number of the good, and to him be the praise and the glory.’ I wish (concludes the Chevalier de la Tour) this time was again returned, for I think there would not then be so many censured as there are at present.”

THE most common and frequent occasions on which knights were made, independent of those which happened in war, were at the great feasts of the church, above all at the feast of Pentecost, when a great number of royal youths, the sons and brothers of kings, from the reign of Philip Augustus to that of Philip le Bel, received the gift of knighthood; and Henry the Third, since that time, chose the same feast for the institution of the order of the Holy Ghost: also at the publications of peace or truce, the corona-

tion of kings, the birth or baptism of princes of royal houses, and the days on which these princes had themselves received knighthood. Louis the Fourteenth followed this ancient custom, in the year 1661, when he made a promotion of knights of that order, on occasion of the birth of the dauphin. On those days also which were the investitures of some great fiefs, on the betrothings and marriages of these princes, and their entries into the principal cities of their government. In 1238 they made knights at Compiègne, on the marriage of Robert, the eldest brother of St. Louis; and at Saurmur, in 1241, at the marriage of Alphonso, his second brother.—Charles the Eighth made a magnificent entry into Naples, and the noble and beautiful ladies of the city and the country came through the streets and squares of the city, attended by their children, and were so richly ornamented from head to foot, that there was nothing to be seen, even in
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France, to compare with them for splendour, beauty, and elegance of dress. These ladies, as they passed along, presented to the king their young children, and besought him to confer on them, with his own hand, the order of knighthood; reputed this the highest honour and best fortune that could be bestowed on them; which the king could not refuse to such tender and beautiful petitioners.—The most important acts of princes could not be celebrated in a more suitable manner, as they were the natural chiefs of knighthood; and no circumstances could be chosen more proper, to give a lustre to the reception of the new-made knights.

IN the time of peace, the dress and the ceremonial of these promotions was more regular and magnificent; the knights unemployed in war, for which they waited with impatience, had no other means of testifying their acknowledgment for the favour of knighthood, than by giving the

princes, their benefactors, a lively image of war, by the spectacles of the tournaments ; these therefore almost always succeeded their new dignity, and in them they signalized, with an ardent emulation, their skill, their strength, and their valour. Henry the Fifth king of England having married the daughter of Charles the Sixth king of France, being solicited by the French and English knights to celebrate his marriage by jousts and tournaments, according to the ancient custom ; he refused this honour, that he might employ his arms in a more useful manner ; saying, “ I request Monsieur the king, whose daughter I have espoused, and I command all her servants, and my servants, that to-morrow morning they all hold themselves in readiness to sit down before the city of Sens, wherein are the enemies of Monsieur the king ; and there let each one of us joust and tilt, and shew his strength and his valour ; for the most laudable and perfect prowess in
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the world, is that of doing justice on the bad, that the poor people may live in peace." To which King Charles and every one consented; and they did on the morrow as had been agreed.

It is easy to imagine what emotion was produced in all hearts, by the proclamation of these solemn tournaments, long before announced in the most pompous terms; they animated all the knights and squires in each province or canton, and in each court, to make other tournaments, wherein, by all kinds of exercises, they might prepare themselves for appearing on a greater theatre: private gentlemen, instead of resting idle in their castles, repeated daily among each other these exercises, that they might be capable of obtaining the rewards promised in the high tournaments, where they should have for spectators the flower of every court in Europe. In Germany, we learn by Tacitus, the intrepidity and agility which
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were shewn in the tournaments, where they are still practised : but Nithard, the nephew of Charlemagne, has given a more exact view of the wisdom and the modesty which tempered the activity and the ardour of these combats, and a touching and curious description of the union, in which Lewis of Germany and Charles his brother lived after the treaty of peace which succeeded the battle of Fontenoy in 842 :—“ These princes were continually making presents to each other, to testify their mutual affection ; they had only one house, that they might never be separate ; and such was their congeniality of disposition, that the amusements and employments of the one, were the amusements and employments of the other : they assisted together at the exercises of their different subjects, who in equal number performed them in the midst of a prodigious multitude of spectators : each party charged in these combats with so much fury, that they appeared to be mortal enemies ;

mies ; till the vanquished, covering themselves with their bucklers, were obliged to make a precipitate retreat ; soon after which, recovering breath, and resuming their ardour, they faced about, and obliged the other party to fly in their turn ; at last the two kings advanced on horseback, with all their young nobility, and, with loud shouts, brandishing their glittering javelins and lances, charged sometimes one party, sometimes the other ; and it was worthy of admiration, that the dignity and caution of this numerous multitude, composed of so many different nations, was such (rarely seen in the smallest number of friends) that not an offensive word or action passed in the whole assembly."

IT is natural here to recall what Herodotus says concerning the Olympic games :
 " Some deserters from Arcadia having, in the presence of Xerxes, made a recital of the combats which were celebrating in Greece, at the very time that three hundred Spartans stopped the Persian army at
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the strait of Thermopylæ; a Persian lord, standing by Xerxes, cried out (with a voice that seemed to tremble for the fate of his nation) What men are we about to engage with! insensible to interest, their sole motive is glory!"—In like manner, when the ambassador of the Ottoman empire, who assisted at the tournaments in France, under Charles the Seventh, made report of them to the Sultan and those present, they made a similar impression on his countrymen.

THE invention of the tournaments is ascribed to Geoffrey Preuilli, who died in 1066. From the French courts they passed into those of England and Germany; introduced in the latter, it is said, by Henry the Fowler. And from the Byzantine history we learn, that the people of the East adopted them from the French, who have always distinguished themselves in these exercises above all other nations, to the time of Brantome; who says (speak-
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ing of the departure of Charles the Eighth of Naples) “ this noble king left his kingdom in peace, and gave to the lords and the ladies of that kingdom many pleasures, pastimes, and magnificent tournaments, according to the custom of France, and in which Charles the Eighth was the first distinguished for the elegance of his mien and the skill of his arms.”

WHILE they were preparing the lists destined for the tournaments, they exhibited through the cloisters of some neighbouring monasteries, the armorial shields of those who designed to enter the lists. It was the ancient custom to carry the coats of arms, helmets, &c. into the monastery before the tournaments began ; and to offer up at the church, after the victory was gained, the arms and the horses with which they had fought : the former was done that they might be viewed by the lords, the ladies, and the young gentlemen, to satisfy their curiosity ; and a
herald

herald or purfuivant at arms named to the ladies the persons to whom each belonged; and if amongst these pretenders there was found any one of whom a lady had cause to complain, either for speaking ill of her, or for any other fault or injury, she touched the helmet or the shield of these arms to demand justice, and signifying, that she recommended her cause to the judges of the tournaments. These, after having gained the necessary information, were to pronounce sentence; and if the crime had been judicially proved, the punishment followed immediately.

As by the laws of Chivalry it was ordained, that nobles alone were to be admitted to the tournaments, they also made enquiry into the rank and condition of those who presented themselves, in the same manner as was practised, in the time of St. Chrysoſtom, in the combats of the Circus. The Agonothete demanded, in a loud voice, if any one could ſay, that he
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who offered at the combat was a slave? in which case he was to be rejected. Those knights also, who, in the examination of their lives and manners, were adjudged guilty of adultery or incontinence, were punished. If any one, thus degraded, presented himself nevertheless at the lists, the other knights chastised him; and sometimes the ladies themselves joined in the contempt and punishment thus inflicted for his temerity, and taught him better to respect their honour and the laws of Chivalry. The beseeching their mercy, with a loud and fervent supplication, was the only means of obtaining pardon for the criminal. The instrument by which the knight was corrected, was a sort of switch, or gantlope, which Eustache Deschamps calls, ‘ the branch of the tournament.’

It would be endless to enter minutely on the description of the lists for the tournament, or the places for these

martial exercifes; ſome of which were erected in cities, before palaces or great houſes. Sauval, in his hiſtory of Paris, ſpeaks of liſts ſet up at the palace of the Louvre, at the hotel of St. Paul, and other places in Paris, which belonged to the princes of the blood and the great officers of the crown: and the privilege of having barriers placed before ſuch great houſes, which ſtill continues, originated from the honour due to thoſe alone who were able to give at their hotels the grand ſpectacles of joults and tournaments.

WHEN the tournaments were exhibited in the open fields, the plains were covered over with tents and ſuperb pavilions; ſcaffolds were erected round the courſe, where the multitude of brave and noble knights were to ſignalize themſelves; and they engaged in the joults or combats of lances; theſe were between two perſons only. The caſtilles, or representation of the attack and defence of towers and caſtles, which, from the ardour with which they engaged

engaged in them, were often attended with fatal consequences, as in that at Milan, before king Lewis the Twelfth, who was obliged to use all his authority to separate the combatants, many of whom were cast from the ramparts, covered with blood, into the moat that surrounded the castle, and almost suffocated. And in 1546, the court of France passing the winter at Rocheguion, amused themselves with making castilles, which they attacked and defended with balls of snow; but divisions arising among the chiefs, they became heated in reality, “and in the contest,” says M. de Thou, “the duke d’Enguien lost his life.” And the same author relates, “That in 1606, M. de Rosni had a castille or fortress of wood run up in haste, on the birth of the dauphin; which was vigorously attacked and defended.” To these were added the pas d’armes, or attack and defence of bridges, defiles, the passages of rivers, or any other narrow and important passes; and

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the combats of the throng, wherein multitudes, covered over with armour, engaged together with such clattering and violent motions, that they overthrew one another pell-mell, in the most extreme disorder and confusion.

ALL these different combats were to represent all that was done in war. The most difficult to succeed in, was that of the pas d'armes; this gave rise to the phrase, "He is got into a plunge," or "He will find it hard to get out of the briars." S. Julien de Balleure, in his *Historie Medley*, makes mention of a pas d'armes which was held, for all comers, in the camp of Attigni, during the truce, by Gabriel de S. Julien, his cousin, and the *Sieur de Cressia*, in the place called *Crot Madame*; and no one was able to make the defenders of this ditch quit the spot they defended, whatever stratagems were made use of.

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THE scaffolds were often constructed in the forms of towers; they were divided into lodges, with divisions and flights of steps; they were decorated with all the possible magnificence that rich carpets, showy pavilions and banners, silk streamers, and fine cushions could give them; and were the places reserved for the kings, the queens, the princes and princesses, for the ladies, the young gentlewomen, and all who composed their court: and here were placed the ancient knights, whom a long experience in arms had rendered the most competent judges. These venerable old men, whose great age would not permit them to distinguish themselves as formerly, were affecting spectators of a fight in which they had signalized themselves. Touched with the tenderest esteem for the valiant youth, they recalled to their minds the memory of their former exploits; and in them

they beheld, with transport, the revival of their ancient glory !

THE richness of the dresses, adorned with precious stones, heightened still more the splendour of this spectacle. Judges decreed to that office, marshals of the camp, counsellors or assistants, had, in several places, marked out for this purpose, seats, wherein to maintain, in the field of battle, the laws of Chivalry, and of the tournaments, and to give their advice and assistance to all those who might stand in need of it.

A MULTITUDE of kings, heralds, and pursuivants at arms, spread over the whole course, had their eyes fixed on all the combatants, to give a faithful report of the strokes given and received; they warned the young knights, who made their first entrance into the tournament, of what they owed to the nobility of
their

their ancestors, "Remember," said they, "whose son thou art, and degenerate not!"

THE heralds received eight parisis from each knight, to hang up his helmet at the windows under the atchievement of the tournament: and sometimes at their first entrance, their helmet was given to the officer at arms; but with the following distinction, marking the pre-eminence of the combat with the lance, over that of the combat with the sword:—if the knight had paid the helmet for the sword, he must again pay it for the lance; but when once it had been paid for the lance, he was quit for the sword, and other combats. According to the proverb, "The lance infranchises from the sword, but the sword delivers not from the lance."

FROM these gratuities arose the shouts and the eulogies bestowed on the comba-

tants. A crowd of minstrels, with all sorts of instruments of martial music, were also at hand, to celebrate the prowess and valour which should blaze forth on this great day; pages and serjeants at arms had orders to repair, with a ready activity, on every side, where the service of the lists called for it, either to give new arms to the combatants, who should have broken them in the engagement, or to keep the populace in order, silence, and respect. — “ On the place of combat,” says the Monk of St. Denys, in his History of Charles the Sixth, “ there arrived three Portuguese, and three French knights; when the first placed themselves on the ranks, they made obeisance to the king, who caused it to be cried by the heralds at arms, that no one, on pain of losing his head, should dare to trouble or hinder these champions, either by word, gesture, or any other sign.”

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THE flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of the knights, who, superbly armed and equipped, followed by their squires, appeared on horseback, advancing with slow steps, and grave and majestic countenances. Sometimes the ladies and young gentlewomen led on their noble slaves to the ranks by chains, which were fastened on them, and which they unloosened only at the edge of the lists, just as they were on the point of rushing forth to the combat. The title of slave, or servant of the lady, was loudly proclaimed on entering into the tournament, in whatever phrase she directed, in the same manner as the vassal in war took the watch-word of the lord he served, the knight asking of her what the cry should be which he should cause to resound for her in the tournament. The knights also took the devices and colours of their ladies, as the vassals those of their sovereign lords. Some-

times these devices were enigmatical, and only understood by the persons—for whose love they were so contrived as to be impenetrable to all others. The use of these devices of love, gave rise to a fiction in the *Arresta Amorum*: “A lover preparing to joust, had on armour and dress he had contrived in a pleasant humour, on which he put the device of his lady, and her colours on his housing, lance, and horse: when about to depart, and going to the lady to receive her benediction, she feigned sickness, to excuse herself from seeing him. The Court of Love condemned the said lady to dress, invest, and arm the said amorous petitioner, the first time he should appear at the tournament, and lead his horse by the bridle the length of the lists, one turn, and then deliver to him his lance, saying, ‘Adieu, my friend, have a good heart—care for nothing—your welfare is prayed for.’”

THE

THE knights were often invited to repair to the tournaments, with their sisters or other relations, but above all, with their mistresses, or the ladies of their love; and the champions never failed to name these in their jousts, to encourage and animate each other. “The laws afterwards,” says the author of the life of Cervantes, prefixed to his *Don Quixote*, “censured this as an abuse;” but it was anciently thought, that these badges of honour, conferred by the ladies, could not be obtained but by the noblest exploits; and they were considered by the wearers as assured pledges of victory, and a sacred bond to do nothing unworthy of the distinguished rank conferred by them. The desire of pleasing the fair sex, was indeed the soul of these tournaments.

IN *Perceforest* there is a lamentation this prince makes to one of his confidants, “That knights dwelling in the bosom of
felicity,

felicity, and fullness of peace, have abandoned jousts and tournaments, and all the glorious feats of Chivalry:—Like unto the nightingale,” says he, “ who never ceased to sing with melody and transport in the service of his beloved, till she had shewn herself favourable to his prayers : So the knights, at the sight of beauty, softness, and the enchanting tenderness of virgin chastity, filled the universe with their valour, and echoed the praise of their mistresses, till they had disarmed the rigour of the ladies, whom they thus served : And it was, no doubt,” he adds, “ a just reward of their courage : but if the guerdon of their love had been longer retained in the secret armories of their ladies hearts, Chivalry would not so soon have expired.”—“ Servants of love,” says Eustache Deschamps, “ look fervently up to the exalted seats of these angels of paradise, then shall you joust with valour, and be honoured and cherished.”

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AT the tournament held at Milan, in 1507, by Galeas de St. Severin, and other Lombards, King Louis the Thirteenth was there present in his royal tent; the ladies in their tents were dressed out so gorgeously, that it was a fairy sight to behold.

THE favours which the ladies added to the title of Servants of Love, were jewels, ensigns of noblesse, scarfs, hoods, sleeves, mantles, bracelets, knots of ribbon; in a word, some detached part of their dress: sometimes a piece of work embroidered with their own hands; with which the favoured knight ornamented the top of his helmet, his lance, his shield, his coat of arms, or some other part of his armour or vestment. Often in the heat of action, the fate of war caused these precious pledges to pass into the hands of the victor, or by other accidents in the fight they were lost; in which case the lady

sent others to her knight, to console him, and to revive his courage. Thus she animated him to revenge his loss, and to gain, in his turn, the favours which adorned his adversary, and of which, after the engagement, he was to make her the oblation.

THE Monk of St. Denys, in his history of Charles the Sixth, after having named several ladies, who, at the tournament made on the knighthood of the king of Sicily, and his brother, in 1389, marched with the knight to the barriers, “ They drew,” says he, “ from their bosoms, several favours of ribbons and filk, to recompense the valour of these noble champions.” And Olivier de la Marche relates, that in a more serious, but not a desperate battle, at the court of Burgundy, in 1445, one of the knights received from his lady a sleeve of a delicate dove-colour, elegantly embroidered; and

and he fastened this favour on his left arm, with a tagged point of black and blue, richly garnished with diamonds, pearls, and other precious stones.

It sometimes happened, that the ladies were so eagerly employed in supplying new favours to the knights, that they almost uncloathed themselves. “At the end of one tournament, the ladies,” says Perceforest, “were so stripped of their head attire, that the greatest part of them were quite bare-headed, and appeared with their hair spread over their shoulders, yellower than the finest gold; their robes also were without sleeves; for all had been given to adorn the knights; hoods, cloaks, kerchiefs, stomachers, and mantuas. But when they beheld themselves in this woeful plight, they were greatly abashed, till, perceiving every one was in the same condition, they joined in laughing at this adventure, and that they should

should have engaged with such vehemence in stripping themselves of their cloaths from off their backs, as never to have perceived the loss of them.

IN the Memoirs of the Duke of Orleans, it is related, “ that the knights in the last age, wore in public these favours, but did not always adhere so faithfully to the giver as in ancient times ; for in 1632, Madame the princess of Phalsburg had given to Monsieur de Puylaurent, who was in love with her, a sword-knot, as a badge of her favour ; but he quitted her afterwards to take tassels for his cravat of the colour of Mademoiselle de Chimay, in whom he was become interested.”

THERE is an anecdote of Henry the Fourth, who kept up the character of the ancient knights, by adhering to this custom. Henry always wore, in some part of his dress, the colours he had gained in his serious battles. As
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he was before the town of Dreux, and about to receive the visit of his good cousin the Duchess of Guise, to whom he had sent a passport, he went out to meet her; and having conducted her to his own apartment, he said, "My cousin, you see the affection I bear you, for it is for love of you I am thus adorned."—"Sire," replied she, smiling, "I do not thank you, for I perceive no such fine decorations as those you boast of."—"Not perceive them!" said the king; "you do not look then: behold these colours (pointing to them in his hat) which I gained at the battle of Coutras, for my part of the booty; the others attached to it, I obtained at the battle of Ivry: would you then, my cousin, wish to see on me two finer badges of honour and ornament, to prove myself well-dressed?" Madame de Guise, with admirable shrewdness, replied, "I own it, Sire. You cannot, however, shew me a single favour won from Monsieur my husband."—"No," replied

replied the king, “that could not be, since we never met, or attacked each other; had that happened, I know not how it might have been.”—“Not know how!” replied, briskly, Madame de Guise; “if he did not attack you, Sire, it was owing to God who guarded you: in good truth, he attacked your generals, and beat them well; witness Baron Doué, from whom he gained noble ensigns, and brave marks of honour; this was his triumphal hat, which will be his ornament for ever.”

IN the life of Chevalier Bayard, there is an instance of this kind, which illustrates the beauty of his character. Being declared victor at the tournament of Carignan, in Piedmont, he refused, from extreme delicacy, receiving the reward assigned him, saying, “The honour he had gained was solely owing to the sleeve, which a lady had given him, adorned with a ruby worth a hundred ducats.” The sleeve was brought back to the lady,
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in the presence of her husband; who, knowing the admirable character of the chevalier, conceived no jealousy on this occasion. “The ruby,” said the lady, “shall be given to the knight who was the next in feats of arms to the chevalier; but since he does me so much honour, as to ascribe his victory to my sleeve, for the love of him I will keep it all my life.”

THE victors not only made offerings to the ladies of such favours, but often of the knights, and their horses, whom they overthrew. We ought by no means to consider these presents to the knights as insignificant marks of affection: they had real use; being a means of distinguishing each knight among the multitude of combatants; and the new supply of these gifts discovered them, in the confused heat of the combat, to those who desired to keep them ever in view.

PERCEFOREST gives a curious description of an artificial peacock, a bird we shall see in high consideration, to be wore on the helmet of a knight of the tournament. The top of the helmet was the most eminent place on which to attach the favours the knights received from the ladies. From this originate the mantles and crests in heraldry.

Not only were the ladies deeply interested in these noble combatants, but the attention of all the spectators was called forth continually towards them; each extraordinary stroke of a lance or a sword was celebrated by the martial sounds of the minstrels, and the shouts of the heralds; a thousand shrill cries resounded, with repeated bursts, the name of the victor: the heralds, and the heralds only, using this phrase in their acclamations, "Glory to the son of the brave!" "The reason of this was," says Monstrelet, "that, as there is no knight
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in the world so perfect, but he may commit a fault, which will annihilate, in the public opinion, his other virtues, they never cry, 'Glory to the brave!' but 'to the son of the brave!' for no knight can be judged brave, till his term of life is at an end. By this also they would recal the fame of their ancestors; and warn these knights, that if they diminished, in one point, the lustre of their characters, it would deprive them of the fruits of all their labours. Sometimes the cry was, 'Love of ladies! Death of heroes! Praise and honour to knights who sustain toil! Rewards and arms to him by whom prowess and glory is gained in sweat and blood!' At the vigils of tournaments, where the danger was less, the cry was, 'Love of ladies!—death of horses!'

THE rewards given to the heralds and minstrels from the champions, for the shouts they raised in the people, were received with added acclamations; and the

sounds of 'Nobleſſe!' ſignifying Liberality, were repeated at each new diſtribution. " In the jouſts," ſays Monſtrelet, " that were made in 1440, for the marriage of Mademoiſelle de Cleves, niece of the duke of Burgundy, with the duke of Orleans, in which the Count de St. Pol gained the prize, were given many great gifts to all the officers, by the princes who were preſent; for which they cried, with loud ſhouts, ' Largeſs! Largeſs! Largeſs!' naming at the ſame time thoſe who had beſtowed theſe bounties."

ON other occaſions, the noble knights gave to the poor ones, who had none, the horſes they had taken; which, among the other laws of Chivalry, contributed alſo to the good of the ſtate. A lady thus celebrates her champion for this generoſity: " My champion gives to one his war horſe, to another his ambling palſfrey."

OF all virtues, the virtue of generosity was the most celebrated by the poets, or Troubadours, the romance writers, and the jongleurs, or singers of their poems : and this also tended to the public good, by the beneficent spirit it encouraged ; and therefore was very wisely recommended with energy to the knights. The romance writers also signalized the splendour of their arms, and the richness of their habits. The remnants torn off in the fight, the glittering pieces of armour broken and scattered, the gold and silver spangles, and ornamental parts of the dress, with which the field of battle was strewed, were all divided among the heralds and minstrels.

THERE is a sort of imitation to be observed, of this ancient magnificence, in the court of Lewis the Thirteenth, when the duke of Buckingham, going to the audience of the queen, appeared in a habit covered over with pearls, on

purpose ill fastened, that they might fall off as he moved along, and so furnish him with a genteel pretext for presenting them to those, who should pick them up to restore them.

THE principal laws of the tournaments, called with justice, in the romance of Perceforest, the Schools of Prowess, and given, it is supposed, by the emperor Henry the Fowler, consisted in never striking with the edge or point, but with the flat end of the sword; never striking any one on the back, nor to fight out of the rank;—the knight who rode out of his rank, was anciently held a recreant knight, or a fool;—nor to wound the horse of his adversary. Lancelot de Lac dwells on this point, in the discourse held by Hector with a knight, who had killed his horse under him. To do this was esteemed a great crime in the laws of Chivalry; as it was, likewise, to direct the strokes of the lance to any other part, except the visage
or

or the breast-piece. Froissart, in a very curious recital of the jousts, made in 1380 at Chastel Joffelin, between certain French and English of the two contending armies, observes, that Fermiton, an English, and Chastel Morant, a French knight, came on, in a foot tilt, against each other; the English knight, chancing to slip, run his sword quite through the thigh of his antagonist, whom, notwithstanding the violence of the thrust, he could not overthrow: the knights and squires on each side were enraged, and said, 'it was a villainous push:' the English knight excused himself, saying, 'it hurt him very much; and that, had he known at the beginning of the joust he should have made this wound, he would not have engaged; but that he could not recover himself; for his foot slipped forward on his defence of himself, from the great push made at him by Chastel Morant.'—It was also a law never to strike a knight when his helmet was off, or his visor uncovered. In

Perceforest, a knight, who in the heat of battle struck his adversary at the moment when he had taken off his helmet, makes an apology for himself, as having been guilty of perfidy in so doing.—It was also considered as a crime for several to engage against one. The judge of peace, who was chosen by the ladies with a scrupulous exactness, and habited in a curious manner (but which would be tedious to relate) was always ready to interpose his pacific ministry, when any knight, who had inadvertently violated the laws of the combat, had thereby drawn against himself the enraged arms of several combatants united. This champion, armed with a long pike or a lance, surmounted with a hood, had no sooner touched the helmet of the knight, as a sign of clemency and safeguard from the ladies, than no one dared to lay hold on the culprit: he was absolved from his fault, when it was believed to be in any way involuntary; but if it appeared to be designedly committed,

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it was by a rigorous punishment alone that expiation could be made. Such involuntary errors might very easily be committed, in the agitation and confusion of the knights, caused by the crowd and tumult of these combats, which was sometimes so great, and the dust so thick (says Perceforest) that it was impossible to distinguish any thing. This it was that caused a knight, who was unknown, to be stiled the ‘ Knight of the Smoke ;’ his valour drawing all the spectators after him, and a smoke of dust following him every where.—Another knight (says the same author) stooping in a violent hurry to take up the hood of a lady, and being confounded with the noise and heat of action, he put the hood on his head, instead of his helmet which he had lost ; in which singular disguise, he became a diverting spectacle to the whole assembly.

It was just that those ladies, who had been the soul of these combats, should be celebrated

celebrated with particular honour; the knights, therefore, never ended any combat of lances without a last joust, which was called, the lance of the ladies; and this homage was repeated in fighting for them with the sword, the battle-axe, and the dagger; the latter was, of all the jousts, that in which the knights piqued themselves on the noblest efforts of valour and skill,

IN the combat of lances for the ladies, the attention of the spectators was reanimated, and the weary knights restored to new ardour. “ As soon as the horses sprung forth (says Lancelot de Lac) there was such a clattering on their helmets, that lances flew in pieces; and Gauvain took sword in hand, and fell on a knight, shouting out, ‘ Ha! ha! fire knight! to the sword—to the sword! it is the rarest delight in the world to joust; and I pray you, for the love of her you most delight in, let us tilt, till we can abide no longer,
and

and till we make proof who shall be overthrown."—Another knight holds this discourse with his adversary, after the combat (in the romance of Flores de Grèce) ' While we are yet mounted, and we have plenty of lances, let us yet exchange some pleasant strokes ; for, in my opinion, the course of lances is a more noble combat than that of the sword.' The latter, however, was by Perceforest esteemed the most dangerous combat.

KNIGHTS of valour engaged in them all on different occasions ; and Saintré and his companions vowed never to take from off their shoulders the gage of their enterprize in arms, till they had found a number of knights and squires of renown, and without reproach like themselves, who should engage with them in throwing lances, and in the combats of the battle-axe, the sword, and the dagger.

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THE grand tournament we have thus, in its various parts, described, being ended, they were employed in the care of distributing, with all the equity and impartiality possible, the prize that had been proposed, according to the strength and dexterity that had been shewn; either for having broken the greatest number of lances; given the best stroke of the sword or lance; for having remained the longest on horseback without having been dismounted or overthrown; or, in fine, for having borne the press of the crowd the longest on foot, without taking off the helmet, or once lifting up the visor to take breath, or relaxing from the fatigue of the engagement.

THE officers at arms, who had their eyes continually fixed on this multitude of combatants, made their reports of all that had passed, before the judges, and the other knights nominated to preside at the jousts. They went also through all the ranks to collect.

collect the voices : in fine, the sovereign princes, the judges, and the knights expressly appointed before the tournament, pronounced the name of the victor. The decision was often vested in the ladies, as sovereigns of the tournament ; and, at the foot of their tribunal, the prize was adjudged to the victorious champion.

THE monk of St. Denys relates a tournament in 1389, for the knighthood of the King of Sicily and his brother, in which he tells us, “ After supper, the ladies, as judges of the field, and the honour of the lists, decreed the prize to *two* knights. The day following (adds he) they resigned the lists to twenty-two squires, who had faithfully served their masters, for them to exercise with the arms and horses of their lords. They were conducted thither by as many young gentlewomen, with the same ceremony and the same authority of judging, and of giving the prize to him who should best deserve

deserve it ; and, after having fought till night, with the success due to their courage, they came, at the supper of the king, to receive the decision of the young gentlewomen."

THE third day, which was to be the last of the jousts, there was no order preserved ; the squires ran in pell-mell with the knights, and many great feats were done, which were also decided by the suffrage of the ladies. In the history of the Chevalier Bayard, it is recorded, that, at a tournament he had proclaimed for the love of ladies, in the ceremonies of giving the prize, the nobles and the ladies of the city of Aire in Picardy, where it passed, after many debates, declared, " that, as the Chevalier Bayard had deserved the best, he should himself assign the reward to whom he should choose." This distinction greatly abashed him, and he stood silent a few moments ; but recollecting himself, he said—
" I know not by what grace this honour

is done me ; it seems to me, others have been more worthy of it : but, since it is the will of these lords and ladies that I should be judge,—requesting of all my knights companions present, whose worth is so much greater than mine, that they will not be displeased at my award—I give the prize of the first day to my Lord de Bel-labre, and the second to Captain David, the Scotch gentleman : to them be the presents immediately delivered, and let no one murmur thereat.” On which they began the dances and the pastimes.

IF it chanced, in the adjudging the reward, it was not given to the hero the ladies thought most worthy, a second prize was decreed, which was not less magnificent than the first, and often more flattering for him that received it. A queen (in the romance of Perceforest) preceded by two minstrels playing before her, and marching between two young gentlewomen, who, with their hands lifted up, bore along the
prize,

prize, advanced towards the two knights who had equally shared in the honour of the tournament. She complimented them on their valour, saying, “ The king might justly bestow on you, noble youths ! the richest rewards ; but the present for lovers, and the most suited to your age, is a chaplet of roses ; and with these you shall both be crowned by these young gentlewomen : for no one can discern which has the most nobly deserved.”

WHEN the prize was decreed, the officers at arms went for the lady or young gentlewoman who was to present it to the victor. The kiss, which he had a right to receive with this badge of glory, was the concluding honour of his triumph. Sometimes the prize was given at the lists—sometimes in the palais, in the midst of the diversions which succeeded the tournament. Matthew de Couci, in his history of Charles the Seventh, speaking of the feasts of the Duke of Burgundy, relates,

lates, “ that, while they danced in their fashion, the kings at arms, and the heralds, with the nobles who were appointed to make this enquiry, went to the ladies and the young gentlewomen, to know of them who it was to whom they adjudged the prize, for having the best jousted, and broken points for that day ; and it was found that M. de Charolois had the best deserved. Then the officers at arms led two ladies, who were princeffes (Mademoiselle de Bourbon and Mademoiselle d’Estampes) to deliver the prize, and they presented it to the said Lord de Charolois, who kissed them, as was the custom to do, and as is the law of Chivalry ; and loud were the cries of joy and victory. The prize being adjudged, the knight was conducted by the ladies into the palace, in the midst of a vast multitude, the air resounding with their acclamations, and the most excessive praises bursting forth from those who surrounded him ; and the heralds, the judges, and the minstrels, with

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martial sounds, and peals of triumph, completed his glory." Nor will any, who are acquainted with the honours so profusely bestowed in France on military talents and virtues, and the prodigious number of spectators who repaired thither to the tournaments, be surprized at such impressions made on hearts passionately devoted to glory, and who hoped hereafter to obtain an equal share of applause. The Olympic Games, celebrated by Pindar with all the pomp of sublime poetry, and the triumphs of ancient Rome, do not exhibit a more glorious recompence. In one respect, Chivalry was superior; for it humbled not the vanquished. These blushed not to exalt the prowess of the victor; he might another time yield to their skill; and his bravery heightened, as it were, the glory of their defeat. Neither the wisdom of Greece, nor the policy of Rome, had conceived any system more noble, or more useful to form brave partisans and defenders of their country.

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THE hero, thus conducted into the palace, was disarmed by the ladies, who cloathed him anew in rich habits. When he had taken some repose, they led him into the hall, where the prince was waiting to receive him, and caused him to sit down in the most honourable place at the feast, exposed to the observation and admiration of the guests and the spectators, and often served by the ladies. Encircled with so much glory, he would have required the warning given to the ancient victors, ‘Remember thou art mortal,’ if the precepts of Chivalry had not taught him, that simplicity and modesty alone gave a lustre to victory; and if he had not been directed, from a child, to be the last who should speak high things, and the first who should do them—to be mild among the aged, and stout among the brave—and that he could never praise himself too little, or others too much. Lancelot de Lac describes, in his romance, a young hero, seated at table between the king and the queen, so embarrassed and timid, as

not to be able to look up, though he had just before won the prize, and had been covered with glory in a tournament.

THE same principles of modesty inspired the knights, who were victors, with the kindest attention to console the vanquished, and soften their concern. ‘ To-day (say they to those who held out their hands to them in gratulation of their victory) fortune and the fate of arms, not my superior valour, give me the advantage : to-morrow, perhaps, I may sink under the strokes of an enemy far less powerful than yourself.

THESE examples of humanity, and the lessons of generosity, so often repeated in the tournaments, were not forgotten, even in the fury of war, and amidst the carnage of battle—the knights were as compassionate after, as inflexible before victory.

THE French and the English, without debating (as has been done) to which nation

nation Chivalry owes its origin, have ever used such humanity and faith towards their prisoners, that they have been mutually the firmest supporters of its laws, and have persevered in proving the spirit of them, when their neighbouring nations have given horrid examples of barbarity and treachery to their unhappy prisoners. Olivier de la Marche, in his Memoirs, gives a pleasing instance of generosity in James de Lalain and Piétois, two knights, in 1450, who, in a combat on foot, having overthrown each other, were raised up again by the assistants, and brought to the judges, who caused them to embrace, in sign of peace; and when Lalain, from modesty, would have sent his bracelet to Piétois, according to the convention agreed on for the peace, Piétois declared, ‘ that having been overthrown as well as Lalain, he considered himself as equally obliged to give him his bracelet.’ This new combat of politeness ended by saying no more about the bracelet, and by accepting from

each other a much richer gift ; for a strict bond of friendship was formed between these generous enemies.

THE exploits of the different actors in the tournaments, their prowess, their vigour, and address ; the adventures of the ancient knights, and the heroes who had established the glory of the nation and of knighthood, was the subject of the conversations at and after the feasts. They inscribed them in the public and authentic registers of the officers at arms ; and they were the matter of the poems, lays, and songs, sung or recited by the ladies, the young gentlewomen, and the minstrels, who joined their voices herein with all sorts of instruments.

LANCELOT DE LAC and Perceforest make mention of the registers, in which the clerks inscribed the marvellous adventures performed ; and each knight was obliged to relate those he had gone thro'

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to the clerk, charged with the keeping of these public registers, and to attest the truth of them on oath. — Matthew de Couci, a graver authority, after an enumeration of the vows made by the guests, at the banquet given at Lille, in 1453, adds, “such were the vows which were made to the said king at arms of the Golden Fleece; which vows I have here registered, as exactly as I might, according to his ordonnance, which he had made, as he said, according to, and by the order which had been given him in writing.”

It may be reasonably supposed that more solid monuments conveyed, sometimes, to posterity, the names of the victors at the jousts. Father Defrey, the continuator of Monstrelet, informs us, ‘that in memory of a solemn tournament, given by Charles the Eighth at Lyons, in 1495, three pillars of stone were erected, on which were composed, in Latin

verse, in a curious stile, the singular actions of this grand joust, of which the said King Charles the Eighth was the principal supporter.

THE games that a curious spectator might have seen in the apartments of the palace, at the end of the feasts which were given after the tournaments, were less amusements of idleness, or ruinous diversions, than occasions of exercising the wit, the skill, the imagination, and the talents of those present; for he might have observed the ladies and the knights play at chess, (a game which is looked upon, with reason, as the rudiment of tactics, the most judicious and least equivocal part of the military art): and if the said spectator had lent his ear to the discourses of the ladies, he would have heard them animate the courage of their respective lovers by eulogies on those knights, who had appeared in the jousts with the greatest eclat; and by the testimonies of esteem and grati-

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tude they most liberally bestowed on those their beloved servants, who had excelled in valour. To inspire also this love of glory, the ladies warmed their ambition by proverbs and couplets in their discourses; as, ‘ He that would secure a horse of gold, must first seize him by the bridle;’ &c.

IN a conversation that passed between the Chevalier Bayard, and the Lady of Fluxas, as related in the old and scarce manuscript of the Chevalier’s historian, published by Theod. Godefroy, it is very simply and beautifully represented, that nothing is impossible to the ardent and aspiring mind. At these entertainments it was, that future scenes of honour and activity were contrived and proposed—new prizes of merit, not only in the tournaments, but in the dangerous and bloody enterprizes of war; such as the taking prisoners, gaining posts of importance, scaling walls, &c. In the history of John de Saintré, the lady to whom he had
given

given his heart, proposed to him jousts and combats against the English ; believing she could not give a greater proof of tenderness to her lover, than in shewing this lively interest in his glory. It was by this means, according to Froissart, a lady made trial whether her lover was worthy of her. — “ A knight of Bourbonnois, named Bonnelance, a valiant man in arms, gracious and loving, being at Montferand in Auvergne, in great diversion and pleasure with the ladies and young gentlewomen, they pressed him to engage in some exploit against the English. One of them, whom he loved the best, told him, that she should like, of all things, to behold an Englishman. ‘ If I can be so happy to take one alive (replied he) I will bring him to you.’ Some time after this, he was enabled to make good his promise ; and, to the great delight of the ladies and the young gentlewomen, brought back to them, among the prisoners he had gained, some Englishmen ; and addressing himself to

to the lady who desired an Englishman,
 ‘ Here are several (said he) ; I will leave
 them all in this city under your care, till
 they shall find those who will pay their ran-
 som.’ The ladies laughed, and cried ‘ Gram-
 merci ;’ and Bonnelance turned this event
 into great revelry and delight, surrounded
 with ladies so pleasant and debonair.”

SOME historians have said, that the
 desire of glory was the sole motive of
 Charles the Seventh’s union with the
 beautiful Agnes Sorel : it certainly con-
 tributed to the forming of it. This was
 the principle of the tenderness shewn by
 the ladies to these knights ; and an able
 system of politics encouraged and con-
 firmed, in the latter, these impressions, so
 well suited to the ardour and elevation of
 their natural dispositions. The songs of
 the feats, achievements, or military his-
 tories, and other poems composed to ce-
 lebrate the tournaments, spread abroad
 through all the courts in the world, and
 carried, on the swift wings of fame, the
 name

name and glory of the victors ; warmed all hearts, and excited the most noble emulation. This also was the great view of the romance writers and historians ; and the preamble of every work, whether in prose or verse, composed at this time, is a proof that the same spirit of glory, and martial enterprize, reigned in all ranks and orders of the state. Du Guesclin, a prisoner of the English, relied, with reason, on the love that reigned in the hearts of the ladies for heroic virtues : When being made the arbiter of his own ransom, he fixed it at an excessive sum, the Prince of Wales, amazed at his presumption, asked him ‘ by what means he would ever be able to pay it ? ’ ‘ I have friends (replied he) ; the kings of France and Castile will not fail me in my need : I know a hundred knights in Bretagne, who will sell their lands to redeem me ; and there is not a woman in France, now spinning at her distaff, who would not work her hands off to deliver me out of yours : and if all the
amiable

amiable spinners in France are employed to gain my liberty, do you think I shall remain much longer with you ?'—Valour and virtue could alone inspire such assurance in a man, who, contrary to the custom of noble knights, was the ugliest man in France. In fact, his predictions were verified ; and the Queen of England, wife of Edward the Third, was one of the first to contribute to the ransom of this enemy of her nation : on which, throwing himself at her feet, to testify his gratitude, he said, ' I had till now believed I was the ugliest man in France ; but, from this moment of your majesty's high bounty, I shall begin to conceive great things of myself ; and well I may, by so fair a hand thus enriched and honoured.' With this love of glory Alain Chartier was inspired, in a poem, in which he introduces four ladies, who are relating the different fate of their lovers, each of whom were at the bloody battle of Agincourt : one was killed ; another made prisoner ;

soner; the third was lost in the battle, and never heard of more; the fourth was safe, but he owed his safety to a shameful flight: ‘Ah! woe is me! (said the lady of this base knight) for having placed my affection on a coward!—he would have been dear to me dead, but alive he is my reproach!’—In this sentiment the poet was the historian of the soul; for this magnanimity of spirit, and this esteem of courage, and ardour to support it, were engraven on the tenderest hearts; and were the rich fruits of ancient Chivalry, which burst forth, and nourished that multitude of heroes, who have eternized the honour of the French nation.

P A R T III.

THE tournaments were only devised to keep in action the sons of war, and particularly when, in the times of peace, they had no other employments for their courage. They were always dangerous, and sometimes fatal; many being crushed to death in the crowd, besides those who were killed in the combat. Fauchet says, “ Robert, Count of Clermont in Beauvoisiz, the son of St. Louis, and a first chief of the house, which is now called the House of Bourbon, received, in one of these tournaments, so many blows with a mace, that he was never well through his life.” “ Raoul count d’ Eu, constable of France, lost his life,” says St. Denys, “ in 1344, at the jousts, that were made
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for the marriage of Philip, the son of Philip de Valois." But the most bloody of the tournaments was that made at Nuys, in which, according to Philip Mouskes, there were fourscore and two knights, and as many squires, who were killed.

THE object of these games, justly called Schools of Prowess, was the same as that of our camps in peace; they were to form new warriors, and perfect the old in the management of arms, and in military evolutions; for so they are called in the History of Jerusalein, written in 1177. In these schools of war the masters informed themselves of the talents of their pupils; kept up the habit of command; studied, with more reflection and with less peril, the manœuvres to be formed against the enemy; and, while they applied themselves to render these attempts more regular and more sure, they tried to invent new stratagems of annoyance and defence.

defence. For address and skill were of more consequence, in the joust, than strength; and the most vigorous were often overthrown by the weakest, who possessed the art of tilting, and knew the importance of the different strokes aimed at the enemy, and to parry them in such a manner, as not to lose the equilibrium. Practice was, of all other things, the most necessary, to arrive at this perfection; as is affirmed by Brantôme, in his eulogy on the Marquis de Guast.

THE origin of the tournaments is generally agreed to be in the eleventh century; but they may be traced from the times in which war was regularly carried on, and reduced to principles of art. Their great object, which in their first establishment was perfectly answered, was, to rescue from idleness, and to inspire and preserve courage in time of peace. In a more extensive view, they are to be considered as only weak images, and trivial es-

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says,

says, of military expeditions and battles. It was the enterprizes of war, in the crusades, that inspired the most perfect ardour, and which were announced and published with a pomp and preparation calculated to animate every warrior, who wished to concur in, and partake of, their glory. They were also sealed by public acts, which religion, honour, and love, whether united or separate, rendered equally irrevocable; and the generals and soldiers were engaged, by sacred oaths and vows, from which there was no dispensation, to shed every drop of their blood, rather than betray or abandon, in any situation whatever, the interest of the state.

WHETHER these engagements were most serious, or only trials of skill, the knights wore, in them, chains, or other badges, fastened by the hands of the ladies; who often granted them a kiss, esteemed a sacred pledge of affection, as

Saintre

Saintr  acknowledged to have received from his mistress.

THESE badges, which they never after ceased to wear, were the pledges of whatever enterprize they engaged in; and which they swore, on their knees, and on the gospels, to fulfil. We may trace the origin of these chains, considered as the symbols of an engagement, to the time of Tacitus, who relates something of the same kind, in the manners of the Germans; where, speaking of the Cattes, he says, “ Insolvent debtors become the slaves of their creditors, wearing chains as well as the other slaves; only with this distinction, that, instead of several irons, they have only one ring of iron round their arm.” The penitents, in the pilgrimages in which they devoted themselves equally debtors to the church, wore also chains, as a mark of their slavery; and it was from them, no doubt, the knights took the like, as a badge of their vows

in arms. “ A Polonese lord,” says Sain-
tré, “ who came to the court of France,
wore two rings of gold, one below the
elbow of his right arm, and the other
above his instep, both of them fastened
together by a long chain of gold; and
these he wore for the space of five years,
till he found a knight or squire of arms,
without reproach, who should unloose
them; to accomplish which the more
honourably, he came to the court of
France, where noble and valiant knights
were graciously received.” The Abbé de
Vertot relates, from the Memoirs of Pie-
resc, that John de Bourbon, in 1417, to
avoid idleness, acquire glory, and obtain
the grace of his lady, made a vow, with
sixteen other knights and squires of re-
nown, to wear, for two years, every Sun-
day, on their left leg, a prisoner’s ring
(that of the knights was to be gold, and
the squires silver) till they should find
the same number of knights and squires
with whom to combat. Olivier de la
Marche

Marche relates the formalities observed at taking off these badges: "Galiot," says he, "in the engagements of horse and foot at the court of Burgundy, proposing himself to accept the challenge given by the lord of Ternant, he kneeled down before the duke of Burgundy, requesting of him leave and licence to touch the badge worn by the lord of Ternant. The good duke raised him up, and gave him permission. Galiot then asked the king at arms, and the heralds, 'what was the custom of the country?' saying, 'that in his country, when the candidate wrested the badge from his companion, the life of the one or the other must pay for it; but when he only touched it, it was for the honour of Chivalry.' They replied, 'Such was their custom also.' On which he advanced, and kneeling low, he said, 'Noble knight, I touch your badge; and with the will of God you shall help me to fulfil my wishes for your honour.' The lord of Ternant thanked him very

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humbly,

humbly, and welcomed him to the feat of arms he desired to accomplish." Thus we see it was necessary to have the leave of the lord of the court where they resided. Saintré having failed in this act of submission, the king said to him and his companions, who came to him, after the combat, to ask his permission, "My friends, you act like those who marry their cousin, and then seek for a dispensation." He granted them, however, the badges which the ladies had fastened on their shoulders.

THE religion of the times suggested other vows, of a more particular kind: which consisted in visiting several holy places; in depositing their arms, or those of a vanquished enemy, in the temples or monasteries; in fasting, and other exercises of penitence. In the history of Bertrand du Guesclin, it is recorded, that du Guesclin, before he departed for a course of arms, proposed by an English-

Englishman, heard mass; and, when he was making the offering at the altar, he also offered to God the arms he promised to use against the infidels, if he became victor. Soon after this, he had a challenge to maintain against another Englishman; the Englishman, throwing down his gage of battle, swore he would never sleep in bed till he had accomplished it. Bertrand, taking up the gage, vowed to eat only three sops in wine, in the name of the Holy Trinity, till this combat was over. These facts, from historians, justify the old romance writers; and enlighten some obscure passages in Dante, and other ancient authors.

PERSONAL valour dictated also singular vows; of which the following are examples: "James d' Endelée," says Froissart in his history, "had made a vow, that, in the next battle in which the king of England, or either of his sons, should appear, he would be the first as-

failant, the best warrior on their side, or that he would die in the attempt."—Du Guesclin, being at the siege of Montcontour, swore never to eat meat, nor put off his cloaths, day or night, till he had taken the place; and his squire of honour, at the siege of Breffière, in Poitou, promised, before God, to plant, that day, on the tower of the city, the banner of his master, which he carried, crying, "Du Guesclin! Du Guesclin!" or to die in the attempt.—The same history reports, that the besieged made vows to eat all their beasts, and, as their last resource, to eat one another, in the rage of hunger, rather than yield the town; while the besiegers, on their part, swore to maintain the siege through their lives; and die in battle, or take the place by the force of assault.—The most extraordinary of these vows, was that of the peacock, or pheasant, made by the knight on the bird, as will be presently related. These noble birds, for so they were stiled, perfectly represented

represented, by the brightness and variety of their colours, the majesty of their kings, and the superb vestments with which they were adorned, when they held their plenary or full courts.

THE old romancers observe, that the peacock and pheasant were, as well as venison, the particular food of brave and gallant knights. “ Gaston, the fifth of that name,” says Favin, “ who had been created a peer of France by Charles the Seventh, betrothed to the daughter of that prince, Magdalen of France, and adorned with the order of the Star, determined to celebrate these accumulated honours by a magnificent feast, given at Tours, in 1458, to be followed by jousts, which he ordered to be published abroad. This banquet was composed of five services, and seven entremets, or small plates of dainties, usually served at the tables of the great, just before the fruit. In one of these entremets they brought, in a large vessel, a
peacock

peacock alive, which had at its neck the arms of the queen of France; and round the vessel were ranged various flags and streamers, carrying the arms of all the princesses and ladies of the court; who were very proud of this honour shewn them by the Count de Foix: and so magnificent was this feast, that it appeared an earthly paradise. These entremets were first devised to occupy the guests in the interval between the grand services. They were exhibited before the reign of St. Louis, at the marriage of his brother Robert, at Compiègne, in 1237; and by Charles the Fifth, at a feast he gave, in 1378, to the king of the Romans. "The remains of this ancient magnificence," says De Thou, "were seen at the marriage of the prince of Navarre, in 1572, with the sister of the king; and at another feast, which the queen gave, the following year, to the duke of Anjou, king of Poland: and a taste for these ancient pleasures was preserved, at Florence, to the year 1600, at

at the banquet given, in that city, for the marriage of Mary de Medicis with Henry the Fourth.

THE plumage of the fine birds presented at these splendid entertainments, was considered, by the ladies in Provence, as the richest ornament with which they could decorate the Troubadour, who celebrated their praise: the feathers were interwoven in the crown, given as a recompence for the poetic talents he consecrated to the celebration of valour and of gallantry: and a figure of the peacock was the prize of the knights themselves. At a feast, given for the peace made in 1659, by the city of Marseilles, "the Troubadours," says father Ménéstrier, "came crowned with peacocks feathers, which had been formally devoted to them by the ladies of Provence. The eyes, represented in their plumage, expressed the attention of all the world to these Troubadours." Pope Paul the Third sent to
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king Pepin a consecrated sword; and accompanied it with a mantle interwoven with the peacock's feathers.

BUT the highest glory of this bird, was the most singular vow made on it, which was performed in the following manner:—The day on which the knights were to take their solemn vows, a peacock or pheasant, sometimes roasted, but always dressed and garnished out with its finest feathers, was brought in, with great dignity, by the ladies, or the young gentlemen, in a large gold or silver vessel, in the midst of a numerous company of assembled knights. They presented this dish to each knight, who made his vow on the bird; after which, they carried it back, and placed it on a table, to be distributed among the assistants. The skill of the person who carved it, consisted in dividing the parts so nicely, that all present might have a share. In the romance of Lancelot de Lac, there is a great eulogy

eulogy given to King Artus, for having carved the peacock, at the round table, so much to the satisfaction of a hundred and fifty knights, seated at the feast, that they were all content with the share assigned them.

THE old romancers, who wrote on this singular vow, inform us, that the ladies, or young gentlewomen, after presenting the bird to every knight, chose one of the most valiant knights to accompany them in this ceremony, and to direct the peacock to that knight whom he esteemed the bravest; which being done, the knight elected cut up the bird, and distributed it in his sight. So high a preference bestowed on eminent valour was not accepted, till after a long and modest resistance, and confessing themselves the least worthy of this honour: in the same manner as the knights, admitted into the order of the Holy Ghost, protested they
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were wholly undeserving of so glorious a distinction.

THE account of the singular ceremony which passed at Lisle, also, in 1453, on the conferring this order, at the court of Philip, the good duke of Burgundy, is too curious to be omitted. It was exhibited upon occasion of the crusade against the Turks, when the conquest of the eastern empire was accomplished, by the taking of Constantinople; and is thus described by Matthew de Couci, and Olivier de la Marche, who were at this feast:—"The necessary time for the preparations, and arrival of the knights, was passed in several feasts given by the principal lords; the last of which was that of the duke of Cleves, when they proclaimed the banquet of his uncle the duke of Burgundy; which, according to the ancient custom, was to be given eighteen days from that time. The proclamation was thus made: A lady, mounting on the

table where the duke of Burgundy was seated, by a step made for that purpose, kneeled down before him, and placed on the head of that prince, a chaplet, or crown of flowers : from hence the custom of offering, at balls, a nosegay to the person who is to give the next entertainment. When the eighteen days were passed, the duke of Burgundy drew together his whole court, and the nobility of his different states, to his banquet, which was the annunciation of the high mysteries of religion and of knighthood : When, if the magnificence of the prince was admired in the multitude and abundance of the services, it was still more conspicuous in the elegant spectacles displayed in the entremets, or curious and dainty dishes, brought in between the services and the fruits ; by which the feast was rendered more pompous and amusing. There appeared, in the hall, divers decorations ; machines, figures of men, and extraordinary animals, trees, mountains, rivers, and a
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sea, with vessels on it: all these objects were intermixed with personages, with birds, and other living animals, who were in motion in the hall, or on the great table, and represented the actions relative to the design the duke had formed; which was, to exhibit the feasts of the palace of Alcine, in the ancient court of France. It is astonishing to conceive what must have been the extent of the hall, which contained so spacious a table, or rather so vast a theatre, with the ground necessary for the action of so many machines and persons; without reckoning the multitude of the guests, and the crowd of spectators. In the midst of this spectacle entered suddenly a giant, armed in the ancient manner of a Moor of Grenada; he led an elephant, who carried a castle on his back, in which was a lady, bathed in tears, and dressed in long mourning habits, as a nun, or devotee to the cloyster. When she came into the hall, and was in the midst of the assembly, she recited a poem of
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three stanzas, which commanded the giant to stop; but he, looking on her with a fixed eye, continued his march till he came to the table of the duke. At that moment the captive lady, who represented Religion, made a long complaint, in verse, on the calamities she suffered from the tyranny of the infidels; and reproached the lukewarmness of those, who ought to have succoured and delivered her. When this lamentation was over, the king at arms, of the order of the Golden Fleece, preceded by a long file of officers at arms, and carrying on his head a pheasant alive, which was ornamented with a golden collar, enriched with pearls and precious stones, advanced towards the duke of Burgundy, and presented to him two young ladies; the one of whom was Yolande, the natural daughter of that prince; and the other, Isabel of Neufchatel, daughter of the lord de Montaigu; each accompanied by a knight of the Golden Fleece. At the same

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time, the king at arms offered to the duke the bird he carried, in the name of these ladies; who recommended themselves to the protection of their sovereign, in conformity to the ancient customs; according to which, in the great feasts and noble assemblies, they presented to the princes, lords, and noble ladies, a peacock, or some other royal bird, on which to make vows serviceable to those ladies who should implore their assistance. The duke, after having attentively listened to the petition of the king at arms, returned a billet, which was read aloud, and began in these words: "I vow to God my Creator, and to the glorious Virgin his mother; and after these to the ladies and the pheasants, &c." It further contained solemn promises (the grand intent of this allegorical exhibition) to carry the war amongst the infidels, for the defence of the oppressed church, and that castle, in which this singular ceremony was represented.

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“THE vow made by the duke (says Olivier de la Marche) was the signal of all the other vows; each of which had in view, the proving their courage against the Turks; and some arbitrary penance was added, as, to abstain from wine and meat on certain days, not to sleep in a bed, not to eat on a table-cloth, to wear shirts of hair or armour next the skin, &c. till these engagements were performed.”

THE conclusion of these vows was celebrated by a new spectacle. A lady, dressed in white, in the habit of a nun, bearing on her shoulder a scroll, on which was written, “Grace of God,” in letters of gold, came to thank the assembly; and presented twelve ladies, conducted by as many knights. These ladies represented different virtues; the name of each, every lady carried also on her shoulder, marked on a billet or brevet; and that they were to be of this expedition, to insure its success. When they had passed in review, one after

the other presented their brevet to Grace of God, who read them, and recited, at the end of each, in a couplet of eight verses, the names of the ladies; which were, Faith, Justice, Charity, Reason, Prudence, Temperance, Strength, Truth, Liberality, Diligence, Hope, Valour; all which were to express the virtues necessary to a true and perfect knight. These ceremonies over, they all began to dance in figures, and were sumptuously feasted; and with these allegorical and magnificent entertainments ended this noble and joyful feast.

THESE were ages in which men had need of sensible objects to rouse their activity, and to move and excite them to worthy actions; and perhaps there is no period in which they have not, in some measure, been found necessary. The skill and judgment is shewn in making use of the means, and fixing on such entertainments, to effect this, and promote the
cause

cause of virtue and religion, as are best adapted to the spirit of the times, and the character of the nation wherein they are exhibited. Such were the train of ceremonies we have just recited. They were the necessary spur to animate the knights, who would otherwise have been discouraged by the miseries of the crusades, and the vast conquests of the Turks. The rapid march of these brave knights towards the country of the infidels, though particular causes defeated their project, was a proof of that ardour, for which they were so justly renowned.

ON the creation of knights (more of whom were made in these military expeditions than in times of peace) the sword was presented, by the handle, to the prince, or the general, by whom the honour was to be conferred; and this was all the ceremonial. Possibly, an acknowledged valour was a sufficient title; and this kind of knighthood gave only the rights

and privileges attached to the person, but not those which passed, in general progression, from father to son; and here was certainly no oath required. There was never any important event in war, which was not either preceded or followed by a promotion of knights. The entry of armies, or the disembarking of fleets, into the country of the enemy; the marches; the retreats; the parties sent on scouts; the passages over bridges and rivers; the attack and defence of places, of their suburbs, pallisadoes, barriers, castles, towers, or platforms, in the midst of a castle; sallies, ambuscades, encounters, and battles on land and on sea;—all these circumstances of war raised continually to the state new defenders, under the title of knights; which was granted them as a reward for their desire to spill their blood in defence of their country, or for having thus bravely engaged in its cause.—Froissart, who gives many instances of these promotions, remarks, that, at the attack of the
pallisadoes

pallifadoes of Paris, by the King of England, in 1359, he would have thus honoured his body-squire, Colart d'Auberticourt; but the latter excused himself, saying, that he could not find his helmet; which was an essential piece of armour in these promotions. At the siege of Bourges, in 1412, there were made five hundred knights; and also by the English, in 1333, in the fleet which was setting sail to attack the city of Cayant.—The admiral, who commanded the fleet in 1588, made many knights, to reward those who had most distinguished themselves in the engagement against the fleet of Philip.

It would be difficult to decide, what promotions have produced the greatest feats in war; whether those which preceded the combats, or those which followed them; though the latter were held in greater repute in the time of Brantome. The following instances will prove the excessive glory attached to these mili-

tary promotions, and the ardour the view of them inspired.

EDWARD, king of England, at the battle of Cressy, in 1346, being pressed to send an immediate succour to his son, the prince of Wales, who was only fourteen years old, and who was then in the battle, surrounded on all sides,—“Is he then dead (replied the king) or overthrown, or so much wounded, that he can no longer defend himself?” They replied, “that the young prince yet lived, but that he was in the most imminent danger.”—“Return then (said the king) to him, and to those who have sent you; and tell them, from me, that I charge them to send to me, on no adventure that may happen, while my son is alive: and tell them, my commands are, that they let the young man obtain the honour of his spurs [he had just received these, as badges of knighthood]; for I will (added he) if God permit, let the day be his, and the honour wholly his own.” Those who obtained the spurs of knighthood, before
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the battle begun, were generally placed in the first line, to give them the opportunity of justifying the opinion conceived of them.

THERE is a fine example of intrepidity given in the history of Boucicaut's life, who, being not past childhood, but inured to labours, when he followed Charles the Sixth, in the war against the Flemings, was made a knight by the duke of Bourbon, in whose company he was enrolled. "At the battle of Rosebeck (says the historian) the young Boucicaut would measure his sword with a great fat Fleming. As he was levelling a stroke at him with his axe, which he held with both his hands, the Fleming, seeing him to be a child, and judging of him by his size only, sneered at him, saying, as he beat the axe out of his hands, 'Go, infant, go and suck! The French want men, indeed, when they bring such children to battle!' The young boy, becoming furious by the
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loss of his weapon, glides under the arm of the giant, and, drawing his dagger, plunges it into his side, maugre his cuirass, and leaves him extended on the ground. ‘Do the infants of thy country (retorted Boucicaut) amuse themselves with such pastimes as these?’—With this anecdote may be compared that of young Boutieres, related by the Abbé Du Bos; who, at sixteen years of age, made an Albanian giant prisoner, and then gave him a challenge, to prove his courage point to point, and conquered him without any other assistance.

IN the year 1554, knighthood was granted by the duke of Guise, with other favours, to recompense the officers, who had distinguished themselves at the battle of Renti. It was thought, however, by the ablest politicians, that knighthood should be conferred after, and not previous to, battle; honours possessed not always producing the same effects as honours

nours desired: and sometimes a battle designed was not given; as it happened at Vironfosse, in 1339. The armies were in presence of each other, and even ready to charge: on this, they made some knights; and then separated without any engagement. A hare, which ran across the field, during these transactions, gave these knights, by way of derision, the title or nick-name of ‘Knights of the Hare.’

BRANTOME always prefers the knight-hood conferred after battle to that given before. Having related the services that the Bastard of Bourbon rendered to Lewis the Eleventh, he mentions the rage he was in, on being called by the king to make some knights, when he was just ready to charge the enemy: he cried out, “Sire! Sire! advance! it is now no time to amuse yourself in making of knights! behold the enemy—let us employ ourselves with them!” And Mons. Sanfac says, that those who wished for this ho-

nour before battle, were apprehensive lest their king or general, who promised it, should die in the engagement, or they themselves without it. This ambitious ceremony is not now practised; for whether the soldier dies valiantly, or survives honourably, he is as highly esteemed as if he had received this dignity: and it has happened, that many, who have had it before battle, instead of fighting valiantly, have done nothing, or run away—and their knighthood was finely bestowed! The bravest have, indeed, chosen knighthood after battle; as Francis the First, who received it after the battle with the Swifs, from the brave Bayard; and M. de Thavares, after the battle of Renti; who was not only made a knight of honour, but of the same order of King Henry himself.

THE apparent advantages that attended these military promotions, rendered them very frequent and very numerous. At the siege of one place only, in the reign of
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Charles the Sixth, many hundred knights were made ; and still more in the reign of Charles the Seventh ; a reign fruitful of events. When the French recovered from the English the places they had usurped, it was added to the articles of capitulation, “ that if, in a time specified, there came an army to defend the place, they should be obliged to give battle, and the place should remain to the victors.” These capitulations continued to the reign of Lewis the Thirteenth.

THE inhabitants of Senlis, besieged by the Leaguers, imitated, in 1589, the ostentation of the ancient knights. Cannon being brought to force them to surrender, they were seen running on the ramparts, and preparing for battle. “ What occasion is there for cannon (said they) to ruin our fortifications ? we are ourselves ready to pull down our walls, if you will only promise to attack us.” Villars, in the opposite party, did not maintain less haughtiness,

haughtiness, on the attacks made by the royalists, in 1592, against the city of Rouen, where he commanded. He gave a tournament without the gates of the city; and proposed prizes, as if it had been a time of peace: meaning, by this spectacle, to brave his enemies.

It is to Chivalry that the French owe the recovery of their provinces. Never was the glory of the French name carried higher, than in those times when it was most honoured. In a discourse, pronounced before Henry the Third, in 1588, this glorious testimony was rendered to the French nobility, by Montholon, keeper of the seals.

FRANCE and England, so long enemies, beheld their champions, even in the time of peace and truce, take arms against each other: not to attack or defend towns or provinces, but from a more interesting motive; to maintain the pre-eminence of valour, without ceasing disputed between the two nations. These duels, or single combats,

combats, between the French knights and the English, or the Portuguese, (who, abusing the pretext of combating for the honour of the ladies, took part with the former) were often terminated to the advantage of the French, and always to the honour of Chivalry.

THE French knights, allied to the house of Orleans, returning from their victory, in 1408, made their entry into Paris, dressed in white. The lord of Clare, reconducting into England, in 1389, the lord of Courtenai, who had jousted one turn only against Gui de la Trimouille, dissembled his anger at the injurious observations the Englishman made against the Chivalry of the French. He had forbore to answer them, in the fear he might violate the safeguard which had been committed to him; but they were impressed upon his heart; and, when he had restored the stranger safe to the English land, he thought there was no reason for keeping fair

fair with him any longer. He therefore repaid, with interest, the affront he had received ; fought the Englishman with a sharp sword ; pierced his shoulder, and threw him to the earth. But, instead of the glory which he expected to acquire for this action, he was, on his return to France, put into prison, by the decision of the Constable and the Marshals of France, for having jousted without the permission of the King ; and, above all, against a stranger, the safety of whose person had been intrusted to his care : and he would have suffered banishment for his crime, if the lords and the ladies had not obtained the remission of a fault they could not help praising in their hearts.

THE law, which exacted the permission of the King for these encounters, was not always strictly adhered to, especially in latter times. In 1409, a great English lord, called Cornwall, having passed into France, under a safe conduct, to joust for the love
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of his lady, found a knight ready to engage with him in this proof of love; when, just as they were on the point of beginning the combat, they were separated by order of the King; who, at the same time, made a law, which forbade any, in future, from being received into the kingdom of France, to engage in any feat of arms, or in any battle, unless he had the badge of permission from the King of France, or the court of parliament.

A SINGULAR proof of this ardour for glory happened in 1414. Twenty brave knights, of illustrious birth, came from Portugal, with a magnificent equipage, to supplicate the King of France, that he would permit them to prove the valour of so many French knights, either in duel, men against men, or in engagements of an equal number; on condition that the victor should kill the vanquished, if he did not freely surrender. They said they had sworn this among themselves: and though the wisest people thought that there was

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the more cruelty in this challenge, as it was lighting up discord between people who had no cause of hatred, it was not possible to turn them from their purpose ; and it was as difficult for the King of France to refuse his nation the honour of cooling the blood of those, who would otherwise have eternally vaunted their courage, and the cowardice of the French. So ardent were the French knights to prove their courage, that they told the king, but with a polite gallantry of manner, that if the devil himself was to come from hell to make such a challenge, there would be people enough in their kingdom who would engage with him. Their request was granted. But though the Portuguese, in this contest, shewed much experience and great valour, the French gained the day.—Another Portuguese was not more fortunate against a squire of Bretagne, who, in a combat which lasted an hour and a half, with heavy blows of the mace, and such rapid showers of
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bloody strokes, as were terrible to behold, had never once lifted up his visor to take breath for a moment. And several other Portuguese were defeated, which (says the historian of the reigns of Charles the Sixth and Seventh) a little humbled the arrogance of that nation.

To these combats might be added those which were proposed in the diverse factions, which have too often divided the French nation and its princes, the Orleanois, the Burgundians, the Armagnacs, and the Royalists; with that celebrated challenge, in 1590, after the raising of the siege of Paris, which Henry the Fourth offered, by a herald, to the Duke de Mayenne, to determine their quarrel; that a decisive engagement might at once end the calamities of France.

THE combats related above, established the fame of those particular knights only who engaged in them. It is now time to

view the common efforts of the whole body of knights, for the honour and defence of the state: and, instead of enlarging on the most glorious periods of the French history, it may be proper to select the unfortunate events which happened in the reigns of King John and of the three Charles's his successors; as they would probably be chosen by the enemies of France, to prove their superiority over that nation; which would perhaps have never been conquered, if it had not believed itself invincible, and disdained that prudence and wisdom which are no less necessary in war than in council.

KING JOHN continued a long time prisoner, with several princes of the blood. The members of the state, separated from their head, remained almost inactive, or divided amongst each other; and made a weak resistance to the common enemy: in fine, all things seemed to threaten the total
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ruin of Chivalry. A faction, known by the name of La Jacquerie, formed itself in the Beauvois, extended through the provinces, and leagued together to give the last stroke to this illustrious body. More than a hundred thousand peasants, armed, resolved to exterminate the nobility, to ravage the lands, to burn the castles, and to massacre the knights, the squires, and, above all, the gentry, without sparing either women or children. Their body accumulated as they spread over the country; and to signalize their inveterate hatred against the nobles, and, as it were, to insult the tenderness and humanity of Chivalry, they extolled as a virtue the most brutal ferocity, and the most barbarous inhumanity. The Duchess of Normandy, the wife of the Regent, the Duchess of Orleans, and three hundred ladies and young gentlewomen, were at Meaux, with the Duke of Orleans, in the utmost terror for their situation. Some detachments of these madmen, joined by

others, who flocked to them daily from Paris and its environs, thought themselves sure of dividing a spoil, which it seemed impossible to prevent their seizing. The inhabitants had opened their gates; and, in concert with the faction, had reduced these noble ladies, and their train, to refuge themselves in the frontier of Meaux (a part separated from the rest of the town by the river Marne). The danger was extreme; there was no excess which might not be dreaded from this furious banditti, whom nothing intimidated, and by whom nothing was respected. The Count de Foix, and the Captal of Buch, who, just at this crisis, returned from the crusade of Prussia, learned these fatal accounts at Chalons. Though they had only sixty lances (that is to say, sixty knights) and their ordinary retinue, they immediately took the resolution to go and join themselves to the small number of those, who defended the fortress of Meaux. The honour of the ladies, so exposed, did not permit

permit the Count de Foix to reflect on the danger; nor the Captal of Buch to remember that he was an Englishman. With heroic ardour he took advantage of the liberty, which the truce between France and England gave him, to follow those inclinations of heart, which, in brave knights, were more powerful than national enmity. — These valiant officers had no sooner joined the Duke of Orleans, than the Jacquiers collected together, disposing themselves so, as to make one common effort to reap the fruits of their crimes, and fulfil the measure of their wickedness. These brave knights and their train had no other apparent resource but inevitable death; nor any other ramparts to oppose to the rebels, than the banner of the Duke of Orleans, that of the Count de Foix, and the pennon, or standard, of the Captal of Buch. With only this defence, they open the gates, and march intrepidly to the enemy. On the first view of their fierce aspect, a panic

seized the troops of La Jacquerie; the knights made day shine through their trembling ranks; killed seven thousand men on the spot; and returned triumphant to the ladies, whom they had so gloriously saved from destruction. Memorable day!—day equally renowned for the heroes and the ladies, whose power had infused such courage, and produced such shining exploits of valour.—Enguerrand de Couci pursued, on all sides, the scattered remainder of these robbers; and completed the extermination of a faction, which had sworn the destruction of all the French nobility, and consequently the ruin of the whole kingdom.

CHARLES the Fifth, convinced of the utility and importance of Chivalry, by the experience he had of it, during his regency, did not, when he mounted the throne, neglect an institution so capable of advancing the great objects of his policy. His orders, seconded by the brave

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Du Guesclin, revived in the nobility, and in their armies, the ancient spirit and discipline; and this prince soon proved the advantage of such a well regulated militia. He was hereby enabled to send several armies into the different provinces of his kingdom, the whole of which was indeed a field of battle; so great was the multitude of enemies with which he was surrounded:—while he himself remained in the center, directing the different movements of this vast body: and, being the soul of all their actions, his conduct met with the reward it merited; for, in a few campaigns, he left to his enemies only a hamlet, or single post, in that vast territory, of which they had been the masters. Chivalry, thus revived with lustre and prudence, restored to the French what imprudence had caused them to lose.

IF the French knights thus exemplified their courage in the reign of Charles the Fifth, and delivered France from its calamities,

calamities, they acquired no less honour, in the beginning of the reign of Charles the Sixth, by their vigilance and activity in preventing the misfortunes with which the state was threatened : which will be easily seen, if we reflect on the situation of the kingdom, when Charles the Sixth mounted the throne. The Ghentois, or people of Ghent, who were formidable for their multitude and their fury, armed against the Count of Flanders, their liege lord, whose suzerain, or lord paramount, was the King of France ; and they strengthened themselves by an alliance with the King of England, promising to aid him in his chimerical rights over the empire of France. Charles, supported by his knights, flew to the assistance of his vassals ; attacked, broke, and put to flight the enemy, with the slaughter of six-and-twenty thousand men left dead on the spot.

SUCH a glorious beginning promised a peaceful reign ; and insured that affection

affection to the prince, which is the never-failing pledge of his prosperity. Nevertheless, the division among the French princes, arming one against another during the dreadful malady of their sovereign, announced new misfortunes to the state: yet, to the end of his life, respect for, and attachment to, the person of their king, suspended the cruel effects of these dissensions. But at last his death plunged the nation into that fatal abyss of calamity, which had so long been dreaded. The French beheld the scepter pass into the hands of strangers; the legitimate heir dispossessed of his right, confined to a single city of his kingdom, and invested only with the shadow of authority,—wanting almost necessities, and in a condition to envy the felicity of every individual in his kingdom. What now was become of Chivalry? It was fallen, with the monarch, into a lethargic despondency: when one lady re-animates the sleeping king; and another, in the habit of war, presents

presents herself before the nation. Thus those, whose honour had been defended by Chivalry, became a defence to its honour in return. On the signal of an armed woman, the French beheld the image of Chivalry raised from the dead. All range under the standard of this heroine ! It resumes its ancient vigour ; the triumphant king is restored to all his rights ; and the nation recovers its legitimate sovereign.

FROM the time of Charles the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh, their successors, at the peril of their lives, have always taken arms, either to deliver their people from domestic calamities, on the vexations of particular lords ; or to oppose those powers, who have invaded the dominions of France. The knights, ever the faithful supports of the throne, were the inseparable companions of the prince in these continued labours ; and, being always protected by the sovereign, were the protectors of his state. To repeat all their triumphs,

triumphs, would be to repeat the history of the French nation; since the other bodies of militia were weak defenders, in comparison, of the glory of France. Some archers, and a multitude of common people, very ill disciplined, were chiefly useful in despoiling those, whom the knights had routed and overcome. The knights alone sustained all the weight of war, made and defended the sieges, and were always equally ready for combating on horseback or on foot, for forcing retrenchments, and mounting to assaults. On these occasions, the knights put in practice what they had learnt in the tournaments, which always represented some military action, or attack of places. I will not assert they dug, as in real sieges, subterraneous routes, to sink the ramparts on one side, and on the other, to render this fruitless, by filling them up again; but it is certain they regarded the springing of mines as the most

most noble, because the most perilous, enterprise of war. In 1388, the duke of Bourbon besieging the castle of Verteuil, in Angoumois, caused a mine to be opened, in which he fought a long time, sword in hand, against a squire, who commanded in the absence of his captain. They had given and received several strokes; when the squire hearing the cry of Bourbon!—Bourbon!—Our Lady! [this was the cry of the duke]—finds, with amazement, he is at blows with his prince: he falls back with respect, touched with the honour he has just received; he delivers up his arms, gives up the keys of the place, and is made a knight by this illustrious enemy, against whom he vows never more to be armed.

HISTORY, after this, speaks of these subterranean combats; but it gives no instance more memorable than that at the siege of Melun, in 1420. On its being said,

said, that in mines the most valiant actions were performed, it was made known, that if any persons wished for this honour, they should present themselves. Several knights and squires engaged either in single combat, or two against two, in this mine: it was narrow, and so crooked, that it was scarcely possible to manage the battle-axe, without shortening it; which done, they could not yet reach each other; for there was a thick board, placed across the mine, breast high; and the combatants were expressly forbid to pass either over or under it. Flambeaux, and other lights, rendered these feats of arms visible, which otherwise must have been buried in profound darkness. The king of England, and the duke of Burgundy, made several knights, as did the lords also, of those who had shewn feats of valour in this mine; ordered trumpets and minstrels to sound, and made great joy in this siege: as did the lord of Barbasan, who commanded in the place;

place; and supplied the want of martial instruments, by the bells of the city.

THE combats of the sword, the axe, and the dagger, which followed the jousts, did more particularly give them the name of tournaments, because of the action of the champions, who turned in them continually; whereas the jousts, or combats of lances, passed in a straight line. The appearance of the ladies gave animation to these preparatives of war; and it was a noble spectacle to behold the latter, placed in their splendid lodges or booths, opening the curtains which ornamented and sheltered them, to look out, and view the noble games, which kept them in anxious suspense. Thus was the whole a school in which every manœuvre of war was developed. The jousts represented single combats; the tournaments, the skirmishes that happen in war; and the combats of the multitude, general battles: and in the Pas d'Armes were represented the
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attack and defence of bridges, passes, defiles ; the castilles, the assaults of towers, and the combats of the barriers, approaches and retreats ; and the jousts in mines were to exhibit the last efforts that could be made to force the place from the enemy.

IN the account of the tournaments given at Pleffis-lès-Tours, for the marriage of Madame Claude of France, daughter of Lewis the Twelfth, were represented combats of the multitude. The prize of honour for those who had performed the highest deeds, to prevent the decline of valour, was every where in use, where Chivalry extended its laws ; and, in so many examples, that which is given in the history of Edward the Third, king of England, and the prince of Wales, his son, surnamed the Black Prince, may be cited with just preference ; because these examples are the most memorable, and the

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best fitted to instruct in the ceremonies of this wise institution.—These two princes, it is true, were the most redoubtable adversaries that the French nation ever had : but the ancient French knights, admirers of virtue, even in their enemies, would not have disavowed the highest eulogies that could have been given them ; since Edward and his son owed their great success to their zeal for Chivalry.—Of what import is it from whence examples are borrowed ? It may be said, without breach of truth, that all the heroic virtues, and above all the courtesy and humanity, that reigned at that time in the Christian states, were the effect of Chivalry, and equally belonged to all the orders of knights.

JOINVILLE thus finishes the eulogy of Messire Henry de Cône, his uncle, who died covered with wounds in an action against the Turks : “ I will testify of him,

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that he had been in thirty-six battles, and many feats of war; and that he had, in a number of them, carried off the prize." King John of France, desirous to re-animate Chivalry, commanded that, on the evening and day of the first public feast in the royal house, there should be a table of honour, at which should be seated nine of the bravest men, in imitation of the nine worthies, who should be found at that feast; and that they should be admitted into his new order of the Knights of the Star. They were to be chosen from the three different ranks of knights princes, bannerets, and batchelors; and every year this custom was to be repeated.

IN the defiance of arms, proposed during the siege of Arras, at Lens, in Artois, between four Frenchmen, whose chief was the Bastard of Bourbon, a child of seven or eight years old;—four Burgundians, headed by the Chevalier Cottebrune, who was afterward marechal, were

their opposers. The chevalier, who was a knight of a great size, as well as of great valour, had his lances brought, the finest and longest that could be seen; but when he knew he had to do with a young boy, he got lances so made, and he managed them so courteously, that, in the course of arms with the Bastard, he avoided the possibility of wounding him.

THE Chevalier Bayard shewed the greatest humanity and charity towards his enemies; sparing their property, and paying, as he went along, for all he was furnished with. Being told, that it was permitted, in an enemy's country, to live at their expence,—he replied, “It is so; but I think we ought not to do all that is permitted: the right of war is one thing, the right of justice another: I rebuke not what others do, but I will not do it myself.” On taking a prize, one of his knights, who was not present, expressing a grudge for the advantage

Bayard

Bayard had gained, he generously gave him half, which was seven thousand five hundred ducats ;—for it was a great prize ;—and the other half he bestowed on his brave soldiers : so forgiving was he, and so liberal was his nature, that he reserved none for himself.

EDWARD the Third had the generosity to crown an enemy, who had not shewn him the least respect. In 1347, a calm seemed to reign between the French and the English, on the faith of a truce, when the lord Geoffrey de Charni, who commanded at St. Omer, unfaithful to the most essential duty of a loyal knight, and pushed on by an indiscreet zeal for the interests of his country, dared to form, without the knowledge of the king, the design of surprising Calais. Edward, informed of this project, passed the sea, almost alone, with his son, the prince of Wales ; and scarcely had he set his foot on shore, when he

ranged himself under the banner of the lord of Mauni, his subject, to whom he had given the command; and marched against the French, who were ranged in battle at the gates of the city, of which they already believed themselves masters. They attacked each other, with equal ardour, in the obscurity of the night: the king himself came to arms with Eustache de Ribaultmont, a fierce and hardy knight, who twice overthrew him to the ground: the monarch still rising with new ardour, overcame at last, and forced this desperate enemy to yield up his sword, and to surrender. The next day, in the morning, the victorious English entered the city, with the principal French lords, whom they had made prisoners.

EDWARD was desirous to celebrate his victory, and the day, together; it being the first day of the year 1348. He gave a supper to his knights, after having caused them,

them, and the French knights also, to be dressed in new robes. “The king,” says Froissart, “sat down, and made the French knights sit also; treated them honourably, and ordered them to be served with the first course; the gentle prince of Wales, and the knights of England, with the second course, who went and seated themselves at another table. When supper was over, the tables were removed; and the king remained in the hall, between the French and English knights. His head was bare, and he wore a chaplet of fine pearls. Then began the king,” adds Froissart, “to converse, going from one to the other; and after having made the lord de Charni, the chief of the enterprize, some reproaches, mixed with a soft and engaging pleasantry, on the design he had shewn to deprive him of Calais, — the king came to Eustache de Ribaultmont: ‘You are the knight, in the world, who have the most valiantly assaulted the enemy,’ said he,

‘ and defended your own person ; nor have I ever found any in battle, who, man to man, have given me so much trouble as you have done : I therefore give you the prize, by a just decision, above all the knights of my court.’ The king then took his chaplet, that he wore on his head, which was very rich and splendid, and put it on the head of the lord Eustache, and said, ‘ I give you this chaplet, for having the best combated, this day, of those without, or of those within ; and I beseech you to wear it through the year, for the love of me. I know that you are a gay and gallant knight, and very willingly associate with the ladies ; tell them, therefore, wherever you go, that it is I who have made you this present, if you quit your prison, and you may quit it to-morrow, if you please.”

A DAY still more fatal to France, and, nevertheless, most honourable to Chivalry
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and humanity, was that in which the Prince of Wales rendered, after the battle of Poitiers, to king John, his prisoner, the noblest testimonies of respect and veneration. He constantly refused to sit down at the table of that monarch. “ It appears to me (said this gracious prince) that you have great reason to rejoice, though the day was not yours; for you obtained in it the high fame of valour, and surpassed all the best warriors of France. I do not say this, dear sire, to praise you; for all those of our party, who have seen the whole engagement, have in truth granted this, and given you the prize and the chaplet.” To this we may add the recital of Olivier de la Marche, who says that, in 1452, the duke of Burgundy (after a hot skirmish between his troops and the revolted Ghentois, in which many lords distinguished themselves, and particularly the lord of Lalain) tho’ he knew his people had suffered much
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from them, yet waited in the Boulevard, by the river, for these officers, and had his supper brought there; invited these knights to sup with him; and caused the lord de Lalain to sit at table, and to be seated above him; saying, “that he would preserve the good and ancient customs, which were ever to honour the knight, whose bravery was the most distinguished in the day of engagement.”

OF all the recompences of Chivalry, the most glorious, without doubt, were these prizes of valour, and the marks of honour, given by those whose judgment could not be disputed; and this was, indeed, a tribunal of glory without appeal.

THE English also gave the same honours to those who, in a day of action, had surpassed all other combatants. “James d’ Endelée, a brave English knight, after the battle of Poitiers, received

ceived the highest eulogies from the Prince of Wales. "By your valour," said this amiable prince, who was himself the knight covered with glory, "you have acquired grace and renown from us all; and are held, by indisputable laws, to be the bravest." "Monsieur James," repeated he again, "I, and all ours, hold you, this day, for the best and most valiant on our side.

As Chivalry had always studied to represent in the tournaments a faithful picture of the labours and perils of war; so, in war, were always faithfully preserved the courtesy and the gallantry which reigned in the tournaments. At the encounters made in the mines, in the siege of Arras, all was regulated with the same courtesy as at jousts; even so far, that the vanquished was, by stipulation, to give to the victor a diamond, with a hundred crowns. The Count d'Eu, a young and valiant knight, having defended the passage

sage so valiantly, that Montaigne could never dispossess him; the latter paid him most willingly the diamond, to present to his lady.

OFTEN, in the war, the knights have taken the names of Pursuivants of Love; and, adorned with the pictures and devices of their ladies, have engaged in the most dangerous combats, skirmishes, and battles. Nor was any thing esteemed more serious, than to dispute with the enemy the adoring a lady more virtuous and more beautiful than the mistress of his rival; and the declaration that he loved with more passion and truth. As my lord John Chandos, an Englishman, a little before the battle of Poitiers, had advanced to observe the French army, he was met, on his return, by my lord John of Clermont, one of the marshals of France, who had been viewing, on horseback, in the same manner, the English

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army. Each of them (says Froissart) wore the same device, which was blue, worked with rays of gold round the border, and which they always wore over their upper vestment. Said my lord of Clermont, "Since when here you borrowed my device?" "And you mine (replied lord Chandos) for it is as much mine as yours." "I deny that (said my lord of Clermont) and if there was not a suspension of arms between us and your party, I would soon convince you, you had no right to wear it." Said my lord of Chandos, "You will find me, tomorrow, equipped to defend it, and to prove, by deeds of arms, that my right is as good as yours." My lord of Clermont replied, "These are the boastings of you English! — You cannot invent any thing new; but when you behold it, you are struck with its beauty, and desire to possess it." They then passed aside, nor was more then said or done, but each returned to his people.

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THE lord of Languerant, in 1378, having placed forty men, with lances, in an ambuscade, commanded them to wait for him, till he was returned from reconnoitering the fortrefs of Cardillac, occupied by the English. He advanced alone to the barriers, and addressing himself to the guard, "Where is Bernard Courant, your captain? (said he)—tell him that the lord Languerant demands to joust with him; he is so good and so valiant, he will not refuse him, for the love of his lady; and if he does refuse, it will turn to his great dishonour; and I shall say, wherever I come, that he refused a joust of lances, from cowardice." Bernard did not refuse; and Languerant returned no more to his lance-men, for he lost his life on the spot.

"BUT will it be further believed, and yet it happened (says Froissart), at the siege of the castle of de Touri, in Beauce, that the besieged and the besiegers, in
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the midst of the action, suspended their hostilities, to leave the field free for their squires, who wished to immortalize the beauty of their ladies, by fighting for them? Or can it be conceived possible, that in a hot fire of the squadrons of the French and English, who were met near Cherbourg, in 1379, the knights and squires, having dismounted to fight closer, stopped in the midst of these furious transports, to give one amongst them, who alone had remained on horseback, the leisure to challenge that knight, among his enemies, whom he esteemed to excel the most in love? A challenge of this kind never failed to be accepted. The squadrons remained immoveable spectators of the combat between these two lovers; and never resumed the engagement, till they had beheld one of them pay his life for the title of servant to his lady; which he might otherwise, perhaps, never have obtained from her own hand. This singular combat was followed by a most
bloody

bloody action: and Froiffart adds, " Thus passed the whole, as I was at that time informed." Similar to this account, we see the Greek heroes stop, in the midst of a charge, to relate their own genealogies, and that of their horses. In the wars of Henry the Fourth, and Lewis the Fourteenth, they pistoled one another for the love of their ladies; and at the siege of a place, an officer, who was wounded to death, wrote on the gabion the name of his mistress, as he was rendering his last sigh.

BESIDES the prize destined to the bravest knight, warriors were sometimes presented with chains of gold, which they hung at their necks, and the links of which were increased in number, according to their merit. The kings of France, to the year 1668, gave chains of gold to the colonels of the Swiss regiments, and still present them to the ambassadors of that nation, on the renewal of peace.
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came to us at Easter, my friend, you are too furious in combat! We must chain you; for I would not lose you, but desire to obtain your service on many future occasions." It was thus that the warlike policy of the Romans had invented bracelets, crowns, collars, and other military distinctions, according to the different kinds of service and valour rendered to their country.

IF this love of glory and of the fair sex was thus employed with success in Chivalry, the bond of friendship, so honourable in the sight of all men, was absolutely necessary to unite these rival heroes, without which their emulations would have become fatal sources of division and discord. This inconvenience, so often fatal to states, was prevented by the societies, or fraternities of arms, formed among the children of knights; and those knights, who encouraged them, were considered as so many fathers of families,

families, and these as their common children. But this association was more visible, and still stronger, between those knights who became friends or brothers in arms. A mutual esteem and confidence gave birth to these engagements. Those who were often in the same expeditions, conceived for each other that tender inclination, which a virtuous heart never fails to possess, when it meets with virtues similar to its own. To confirm these bonds of love, they engaged in many high enterprizes, and swore to partake equally in the labours and the glory, the dangers and the profits of them, and never to abandon each other. “ Brothers or companions of the same order could never challenge each other (says Brantome) without the permission of the king; and the marechal de Gié, condemned to death, received a pardon from the king, because he considered him as a brother, having conferred on him the honour of knighthood.”

THE fraternities of arms were contracted in several different ways. "Three knights (says Lancelot de Lac) caused themselves to be bled at the same time, and mingled their blood together." And M. du Cange cites several examples of this kind, drawn from remote history, particularly of the countries beyond the sea. If this practice, as he justly observes, was a barbarous one, nothing was more opposite to barbarity than the sentiment it inspired, which was the most cordial preference and affection. Other companions in arms imprinted on their oaths the most sacred characters of religion. To unite the closer with each other, they kissed together the wafer, presented to the faithful in the mass; and they sometimes received the communion at the same time. Nevertheless, when the duke of Burgundy, in contempt of this solemn engagement, caused his brother in arms, the duke of Orleans, to be assassinated, he found an apologist in Dr. John Petit, who

who feared not to maintain, that, in case of alliance, promise, and respect, from one knight to another, in whatever manner the union is made, if it should happen that it turns out to the prejudice of one of the parties, or of his confederates, his wife, or his children,—he is not obliged to abide by it. But this proposition having been submitted to the decision of the bishop and the university of Paris, was condemned, with an unanimous voice, as erroneous both in faith and manners, and opening the way to the blackest deceit and perjury.

THESE kind and brotherly unions were most common between private gentlemen, who had formerly served together. Brantome, in speaking of Mr. de Taligni, says, “My great friend, my brother in alliance and respect.” Bassompierre and Schomberg called each other brothers; as did the chevalier de Cramail and de Grammont, in 1621. And Madame de

Seigné, who wrote in 1674, says, "I esteem Barbantanne very much; he is one of the bravest men in the world; of a valour almost romantic: I have a thousand times heard Buffi speak of him; they were brothers in arms."

THE most illustrious warriors, in the preceding ages, had given examples of this friendship. The king of Sicily, in 1439, became brother in arms to the constable Artus, the third duke of Bretagne. The count d'Auxerre was companion in arms, which means brother, to the count Vert, at the battle of Cocherel, in 1364. And Froissart, in the recital of the assassination of the constable Clifton, in 1392, says, "The lord de Couci, who kept close in his palace, having heard the news, mounted his horse the next morning, and came hastily to the hotel of the high constable, behind the temple, where they had carried his body; for they had dearly loved each other, and were brothers
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and companions in arms.—Besides other ceremonies, they sometimes exchanged their arms with one another, as a bond of love ; as we have seen done in Homer, by Glaucus and Diomedes. The engagement, then reciprocally taken, consisted in never abandoning their companion, in whatever situation he should be ; to aid him with their person and property, to the hour of death ; and even to maintain for him, in certain cases, the challenge of battle, if he died before he had accomplished it.

THE brother in arms was to be the enemy of those who were enemies of his brother, and the friend of all those who were friends to him : both of them were to divide their present and future wealth, and employ both that and their lives for the deliverance of each other, if taken prisoner. The knights of the order of the Crescent, were formed on this model.—Other associations of this kind were

made for certain periods ; as for expeditions by sea or land, on some martial enterprize ; as that of Saintré, Boucicaut, and Regnault de Roie, who departed together, as brothers in arms, to go against the Saracens ; and repassed afterwards through Hungary, the king of which they assisted in the war against the marquis of Moravia. They took a tender leave of each other, when this war was concluded.

It appears also that these mutual adoptions have sometimes been limited to an assault or defence ; as that of the brave captain St. Colombe ; who being wounded to death in an assault at the siege of Rouen, where Monsieur de Guise commanded, this prince visited and comforted him, saying, that he should ever bear a tender part in his fortune and honour, as his brother and companion in arms.

THE

THE violation of the oaths of fraternity was the highest reproach; and became so to the duke of Burgundy, when he failed in his engagement with the duke of Orleans.—But to this example may be opposed that of the duke de Bretagne, who was long an irreconcilable enemy to the high constable Clifson. At last, hatred gave place to sentiments inspired by dispositions adopted on becoming brothers in arms; for there never was a sincerer friendship than that which reigned in both their hearts, to the death of the duke; and Clifson continued it through life to the children of the duke, for he was always their father. In the peace established between the duke de Bretagne and the king, in 1393—"the good faith (says the Monk of St. Denys) with which restitutions were made, and damages on all sides repaired, was admired by all. But what compleated the joy of the Bretons, was, that the hatred, formerly irreconcilable, between the duke and Olivier de Clifson,

Cliffon, was on a sudden converted into a new and firm oath of brotherhood and friendship; and the duke coming into France, to accomplish the marriage of his eldest son with the daughter of the king, he left to the lord de Cliffon the government of his country, and the care of his wife and children."

ONE more instance I cannot forbear giving of this league of affection, which we read in Brantome:—A young gentleman, of the illustrious house of Auton, in Xaintonge, left his eldest brother to enjoy his rich and mighty lands, and became possessed with the ardent desire, as is customary with younger brothers, to go and see the world, instead of amusing himself at the tombs of his ancestors. He shut up his house, took what money he could amass, and, associating with himself, and taking for his brother in alliance and fortune, another younger brother of Angoumois, of the house of Berneuil, they

they gave their cares to the wind ; and, swearing never to abandon each other, but to live and die together, they set out with mutual tendernefs and joy to seek their fortune.

THE assistance due to the brother in arms, was preferred to that the ladies had a right to exact. A young lady having in vain claimed the protection of a knight, the latter excused himself from it, alledging the necessity which he was at that time under of flying to the assistance of his brother. But such a justification would not have been received, if he had failed in attendance on his sovereign. The duty owed to the prince was preferred to all other duties : brothers in arms, of different nations, were only united together as long as their sovereigns were united : and if their princes declared war against each other, it forced their respective subjects to the dissolution of those societies. But, ex-

cepting this single case, nothing was more
indissoluble

indissoluble than these bonds of fraternity: they even wore the same habits and armour; they wished the enemy to mistake them for each other; and to run an equal risk of those dangers, with which each might be threatened.—Charles the Eighth, at the battle of Fornoue, chose nine of his bravest officers, and gave them a compleat armour, exactly the same as his own. He deceived, by this stratagem, a troop of enemies, who, being leagued together to kill him, fought him through all the ranks, and thought themselves assured of him, whenever they met one of these nine brave nobles. The honour the king did to these illustrious warriors, in the choice of them, was the more signal, as it engaged them in a fraternity of arms with their sovereign.

THIS brotherly union was so entire, that, as we have said, they never owned any friends, that were not equally the friends of both. The duke of Bourbon
thought

thought himself obliged to refuse, from Henry de Transtamare, king of Castile, a considerable sum, merely because that prince was enemy to Boucicaut, his brother in arms : and knights, thus allied, never engaged in any affair, but in concert with their brother knight.

BOUCICAUT passing, on his return from Spain, by the count of Foix's, was several times at his table, with some English knights. As they judged, by the particular abstinence they observed in him during the repasts, that he had vowed some enterprize of arms, they told him, " If that was all, there would soon be found one, who should deliver him from his vow." Boucicaut replied, " Had he combated alone, they might have decided the matter ; but he had a companion in arms, without whom he could do nothing : but that if any of them wished to engage, he was ready ; only that, with their permission, he must take time to make it known to his companion."

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THE English being assembled a little before the battle of Pontvalain, held a council, to deliberate in what manner they should attack the constable Du Guesclin. One amongst them, called Hue de Carvalai, opened his mind in these terms : “ By the gods, Bertrand du Guesclin is the most valiant knight that reigns at present ! He is duke, count, and constable, and was long my companion in Spain ; where I found in him honour, liberality, and friendship so abundant, with so much firmness and humility, and with such an enterprising soul, that there is not a man, from Spain to Calabria, but knows there is not that thing in the world I would not adventure, to serve and accompany him, day and night,—to live and die with him,—were it not that he wars against my lord the prince. This is my sincere opinion of this valiant knight.”

AT the end of an expedition, or when any rupture between the sovereigns annulled these unions, a mutual and exact account was rendered of what had been expended

expended and received, lost and gained. The king beholding Saintré depart for the crusade of Prussia, asked him whether he and his companions had one common purse. And, in the history of Boucicaut, we see he was in society and account with the English knight Carvalai. The prince of Wales having declared war with Henry of Castile, he commanded all the English, who were then in the service of that prince, to quit their Spanish master, and repair to him. Hue de Carvalai, who was of the number, being forced to separate from Boucicaut, came to take his leave of him—"Gentle lord (said he) we must now part; we, who have been together in happy companionship; have had the same will, the same conquests, and the same joys; nor has either received a joy that the other has not partaken of. But, in account, I think I have received more from you than I have dispensed; therefore I pray you that we may settle; and what I owe you, I will pay or assign

assign over to you.”—“ This is a sermon, indeed ! (said Bertrand)—I have never thought of this account ; nor know I whether you are indebted to me, or I to you ; but I pray you, as we are to separate, let us be quit herein. But, if we meet again, we will make a new debt, and will have it written : it now only remains for each of us to act nobly, and for you to follow your master. May that affection, which hath ever been, continue with us ; and, since it must be so, in love let us depart !” He then kissed Bertrand and all his companions ; and their separation was most grievous to behold.

THE most proper example of the advantage of these associations, is that of the brave du Guesclin and Lewis de Sancerre, brothers in arms, and inseparable companions. They laboured a long time, in union, to recover from the English a great part of Guienne ; and gave such perfect models of military valour, as to merit

merit the eternal acknowledgments of the people to whom they were benefactors. "It is enough (says the Monk of St. Denys, in the eulogy of Sancerre) to remark that he was the inseparable companion, and brother in arms, of the famous Du Guesclin; and that having seconded him in his conquests in Guienne, he not only maintained them after his death, but extended them by further victories.

THESE military fraternities gave to particular lords the means of engaging in enterprizes worthy of the most powerful sovereigns; but it was always with the knowledge and authority of that monarch whose subjects they were. When war did not retain them in his immediate service, they associated together to clear a province of the robbers or enemies that infested it; to deliver distant nations, who groaned under the yoke of the infidels; to revenge an oppressed prince; or to dethrone an usurper. Such were the enterprizes of

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the duke of Bourbon against the banditti of the Lyonnois ; of Saintré, in Prussia, against the infidels ; and that of Du Guesclin, in Arragon, against Peter the Cruel.—Boucicaut formed an order of knighthood, under the title of the White Lady with the Green Shield, to restore to the ladies the property taken from them by unjust ravagers, in the preceding wars : and he went alone, on another enterprize, purely to revenge the memory of a lord, whom they had assassinated.

THE duke of Burgundy combated twice in the lists ; once against the duke of Gloucester, brother of the king of England, for the quarrel of Holland and of Hainault ; and against the duke of Sasse, for Madame Catharine de Chevoix, his beautiful aunt, claiming for her the right of succession to the duchy of Luxembourg.—The same ardour animated two knights of Picardy, in 1425, for the maintenance of the rights of
Jacqueline

Jacqueline de Bavière, alledging that duke John of Brabant had a better right to the country and lordships of the duchess Jacqueline de Bavière, his wife, than the pretender to it, the duke of Gloucester.

IT was at Koningsberg, Boucicaut learned that William Douglas, a Scotch lord, had been assassinated by an Englishman ; and that his own companions neglected to obtain the just revenge for it. The noble and virtuous soul of Boucicaut revolted against so atrocious a crime. He provoked the English, and challenged any of them who should dare to maintain that the Scotchman had not been unjustly put to death.—In the history of Charles the Sixth, by the Monk of St. Denys, the substance of the letter addressed to the duke of Lancaster, the murderer of Richard the Second, king of England, was a challenge from the duke of Orleans, to combat him at the head of a hundred gentlemen ; on the condition that the

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vanquished

vanquished should be at the mercy of the victor. The cartel was ill received; the herald, who brought it, sent back without presents, contrary to the noble custom of arms; and the combat was rejected as unequal, on account of the inequality of the parties, since Lancaster was mounted on the throne of England.

THERE was no country in which Chivalry did not labour usefully, either for the public, or for particulars. Nothing was small or despicable in the eyes of a knight, if it comprehended the welfare of any individual. Had he, in his voyages or expeditions, received the hospitality of the meanest person, gratitude would never suffer him to consider that person but as a noble and generous benefactor; he declared himself for ever his knight; and swore to renounce all the glory that could be proposed to him, to acquit himself of the debt; to defend, protect, and succour him in time of need. This oath was
considered

considered as inviolable, if we will believe the ancient romance writers of France. And why should we not, when the customs of antiquity are thought sufficiently proved by all the ancient poets ?

Thus was Chivalry, in these dark ages, a source of continual benefits ; and its peculiar glories shone forth in the noble actions of friendship, gratitude, and humanity.

PART IV.

*Distinctions and Honours in Chivalry,
in Life, and at Death.*

AT all times, and in all professions, there have been men refined enough to look upon the practice of virtue, and the satisfaction of doing good, as a sufficient recompence in itself; and it is not to be doubted but there were many knights, to whom the pleasure of having been useful to other men, and the inward testimony that a generous soul feels in the discharge of its duty, were more flattering than the applause conferred by the officers at arms, or the tumultuous cries of the people in the tournaments and the combats.

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NEVERTHELESS, such pure motives were not of a nature to impress the greater part even of those, who piqued themselves on thinking differently from the vulgar. A wise policy was therefore desirous of multiplying the number of knights; and it was thought necessary to attach to this profession some exterior advantages; to raise its eclat by honourable prerogatives; and to bestow on those, who exercised it, a distinguished pre-eminence above all the other squires and the rest of the nobility. The first distinctions were those of armour and habits; and however frivolous the detail of these things may at first appear to some, they will become important by considering they were the prizes of virtue.

A LANCE of such strength that it could scarcely be broken; an helmet; an habergeon, or double coat of mail; the throat-piece; the mace; a short sword to the cross; and a shield, interwoven with iron, sword-proof, were the

arms assigned to the knights exclusively. The coat of arms, painted on a plain cloth, was the badge of their pre-eminence over all the other orders of the state and of war. Even the squires were not permitted to engage with these knights, on any occasion. Had they been allowed to do so, armed as they were only with their sword and shield, a slight cap of iron which had no crest, and covered with a thin cuirass, or breast-plate—how would they have been able to defend themselves from an adversary, almost invulnerable?—A young man (in the romance of Alecton) offering to make known his innocence by the proof of his sword and shield, adds,—“for yet, alas! knight I am not, nor bear I arms as such.” The squire that took the coat of arms before he was made a knight, was for ever excluded that honour.

THE people wore only on their journeys, and even in combats, a sort of knife, which hung down to the bottom of their thigh.

thigh. The driest and lightest wood was used for the lances ; as the pine, the fyca-more, the aspin, and the linden tree : the very best of all were made of the ash. The top of the lance was furnished with a steel point well tempered, an iron head, and a flag, which trailed along a vast length. —Barbed horses, or horses armed, were also the privilege of knights. William de Tudela speaks thus : “ In a formidable army I counted twenty-five thousand shields, belonging to valiant soldiers, whose horses had manes ; and ten thousand who were themselves, and their horses, covered over with brass and iron, dazzling to behold.” By the first he means the squires, who were never allowed to ride barbed or armed horses ; and by the latter, knights mounted on horses, whose manes could not be perceived : whether it was that the armour hid them ; or that the hair was cut off, that the horses might be armed with the more ease. We shall see this was the case with some knights, who
had

had their hair cut off from the top of their heads. Hunters, for their convenience, have followed this custom for their horses. The knights also fought, at least in the lists, in long robes that came down to their heels; and their horses were covered with housings that touched their feet. It is not easy to comprehend how it was possible to fight in so embarrassing an equipage; but the ancient seals prove it was the custom to do so.

THE importance of the coat of arms may be judged of from relating an anecdote, in the history of Charles the Sixth, of the duke of Brabant, who got one made in haste to go against the enemy, at the battle of Agincourt, in 1415.—“Then came the duke Anthony de Brabant, who had been sent for suddenly by the king of France; he arrived in extreme haste; and taking one of the banners of his trumpeters, and dividing it into two pieces, he made of it a coat of arms.” The general

ral rule that forbade the squires and other persons to challenge the knights, would then have been considered in the same light, as a private soldier, in our times, challenging his officer or his general. And this has passed into the common customs of society, between persons of different ranks ; and wagers or challenges are never given without these reserves, and the attentions that politeness requires.

FLORE, going to defend the honour of Blancheflore, who was condemned to death, by engaging in a combat with the Seneschal who had been his judge, desires to be made a knight ; for, says he,

“ No squire can of right

“ Arm himself against a knight.”

But as knights might abuse their privileges, and commit violence and injustice against squires, ancient jurisprudence, to remedy this inconvenience, says the author of the Assizes of Jerusalem, obliged the knight, in certain cases, to fight on
foot

foot against the squire, as he was armed with only a sword and a shield. The knights lost very early their prerogatives, by admitting their squires, in the fourteenth century, to mix with them in the tournaments and battles. The squires abused this condescension, took armorial ensigns, and insensibly appropriated to themselves the ornaments of the knights. By this invasion of their rights, all rules were broken, all orders were mixed, and the ancient subordination was totally lost. Some knights, however, attempted to revive the ancient laws; and by some they were yet attended to, at the end of the sixteenth century.

EDWARD NORRIS, the brother of colonel Norris, serving under the count of Leycestre, in 1587, had sent to the count of Hohenlo a cartel or challenge, to demand of him reparation for an injury, in having engaged against him. The latter pretended that, by the laws of war, it was not permitted for a common soldier,

soldier, as Norris was, to make such a defiance without the consent of his general. The count of Leycestre maintained the contrary; but, that there might be no pretext for declining the engagement, from inequality of rank, the count made Norris a knight.

IF the arms of thesquires were enriched with precious ornaments, gold, the purest of all metals, was reserved for those of the knights, for their spurs, their housings, and the harness of their horses. It was wrought in the stuff of which was made their robes, their cloaks, and all the parts of their vestments and equipage. The golden harness (says a writer) for the foot, as well as the horse, was destined to the knights; the king, however, granted it to the citizens whom he ennobled. In the dresses distributed to the knights and the squires, gold was for the first, and silver for the second. In public assemblies, the knights, and the ladies of knights,

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were

were personally distinguished by these dresses. The wife of the knight was called Lady, that of the squire, Gentlewoman: and in the public records, or other writings, the titles of Don, Sire, Messire (a particular title of honour, equal to My Lord, My Lady, and Madam) were given to persons of quality. The poet Eustache Deschamps sets the lady and the knight in opposition to the gentlewoman and the squire.

THE usurpations on these titles caused them, though long held up with great éclat, to become of less consequence, and some of them to be wholly lost. The title of Noble Lady, and Madam, was given by the kings of France to the wives of knights; those of squires, even of the best rank, were simply Gentlewomen.—Frances of Anjou becoming a widow before her husband was made a knight, was entitled only Mrs. Frances, not Madam. If any wives of squires were called by the latter title, it was because they had

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been widows of knights who had dignified them with the ineffaceable honours of Chivalry. The daughters of the kings of France alone, from their superior rank, obtained this honour before marriage, in the quality of queens : and this extended so rarely to the daughters of other sovereigns, that the heiress of the House of Burgundy, princess of the Low Countries, was always called *Mademoiselle of Burgundy*, till the day of her marriage with the King of the Romans.—Olivier de la Marche, after the recital of the birth of the daughter of the count de Charolois, in 1456, adds, “ The preparations were made for the baptism of *Mademoiselle of Burgundy* ; for in that time she was not called *Madame*, because *Monsieur* was not son of the king.” Brantôme gives also the title of *Mistress* to the Seneschal of Poitou, his grandmother.

THE silver destined for the squires, and the gentlewomen who were their wives, marked the difference between them and
persons

persons of an inferior situation, who wore only woollen stuffs, or cloth without gold or silver. Knights alone had a right to wear, particularly for the lining of their cloaks or mantles, ermine, sable, and meniver, which were the choicest kinds of fur; less costly furs, of a different kind, were for the squires; and the poorest sort of all for the people. The knight was obliged to keep up, by a magnificent exterior, the respect due to his title. “If (says Matthew de Couci) men who are not knights are obliged to honour those who are, how much more ought knights to maintain their honour by fine and noble vestments, horses, harness, and servants? and they ought also thus to do honour to the other knights their peers.” The long and training mantle, which enveloped the whole person, was particularly reserved for the knight, as the most august and noble decoration he could have, when he was not dressed in his armour. The military colour of scarlet, which the warriors appeared in among the Romans, was

was chosen for this noble mantle, which was lined with ermine, or other precious furs. It was called the Mantle of Honour; and there is yet extant in France an ancient allegorical work, in verse, under that title; with a miniature which gives the representation of it. The kings of France, when they made knights, presented to them these mantles; and this gift was generally accompanied with that of a palfrey, or at least a horse-bit of gold or gilded; which answered to the pledge given on the investitures, as the mark of the alienated fief. These distributions, which made a considerable article in the expences of the kings of France, were called their Livery; and were renewed by them either at the two seasons of the year, summer and winter, says Laboureur, or at the plenary courts of the great feasts. The pieces of velvet, or other stuffs, given now to the magistrates of France, are in memorial of these presents; as the ancient

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right

right of having the mantle of ermine, is figured in the atchievements of the dukes, and the presidents *à mortier*, or presidents of sovereign courts, to whom belongs a cap peculiar to their office; who themselves borrowed the fashion of it from those painted on the carpets and pavilions, under which the knights were in covert before the tournament began. In the promotion (says Madame Sevigné) of sixty and of fourteen knights of the order of the Holy Ghost, in 1688, the king, for that time only, gave a dispensation to several knights, to omit wearing the mantle, that most ancient custom of Chivalry, at the ceremony of their reception. The ordinance of the king of France also, in 1294, prohibited not only the wearing of costly furs to citizens, but the use of gold, precious stones, girdles of gold, pearls, jewels, and crowns of gold and silver.—A woman, whose husband was only a merchant, decked herself with a
coarser

coarser sort of fable, as being the daughter of a knight; considering herself as privileged thereby: which obliged the king to make a new edict. And this was often necessary, to stop the course of luxury, and to bridle the ambition of those, who would usurp what did not belong to their station. And in 1486 all such were again prohibited the wearing of gold and silk; which, by a relaxation of the laws, squires and gentlemen were now allowed, but with great and wise caution. And the attention not to confound ranks went so far, that, in the public ceremonies, when the knights were dressed in damask, the squires were only allowed sattin; or, if the latter were allowed habits of damask, the former were dressed in velvet.—René, king of Sicily, in his treatise on the form of the tournament, recommends to the chiefs to give to each of the judges, chosen from among the knights, a long robe of velvet; to the two others, who were selected from the

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squires,

squires, the same fashioned robes, but of damask.—The queen having sent to Saintré and his companions a piece of velvet, distinguished them from the squires, by giving the latter damask.—Matthew de Couci speaks thus of the engagements between three Burgundians and three Scotchmen: Two of the three champions, who advanced the first on horseback, being knights, were dressed in long robes of black velvet, faced with rich sable; and the third, who was only a squire, had a robe of sattin faced with fur. And at the banquet of the duke of Burgundy, at Lisle, in 1454, the knights who assisted at the feast were dressed in damask, the squires and the gentlemen in sattin, the pages and the archers in woollen stuff. In fine, scarlet, and red of every kind, was appropriated to the knights, from its grandeur and brightness; and is now become the dress of the superior magistrates and doctors in France. “Gentle lady (says the poet Deschamps to Truth) I come
to

to tell thee, that learned doctors and grave magistrates are clad in rich habits, as well as valiant knights.”—The word *rouge*, in the French language, to signify high and arrogant, was probably introduced from this colour being worn by exalted persons; among whom was Arteville, the chief of the revolted and victorious Ghen-tois, who was dressed in robes of scarlet and sanguine, a colour red as blood.—In the ancient French work, in verse, entitled The Lover turned Shoemaker, we read “the most *sanguine* are caught;” where the word *sanguine* is put for vain, proud, arrogant. And Brantome, speaking of the affair of the Swifs, at Navarre, against M. de la Tremoille: “This (says he) was a great exploit, and a lucky hour of war; and so *rouge* did they become and insolent, that all nations were by them despised; and they thought of beating all the world.” And in the Vigils of Charles the Seventh, the poet making Merchandise one of his personages, speaks thus: “Merchandise was then in vogue,

made a great stir, and triumphed so, that those who used it became *rouge* and insolent with the sudden wealth gained to themselves and their posterity."

THE knights had another prerogative with respect to their dress, which did not extend to the squires. In that age, they considered those as clerks or scholars, who, having received the tonsure, were married only once, or who had not espoused a widow; conformably to what is now practised in France, in the order of St. Lazare: whereas, in general, every clerk who was married, lost the ordinary privilege of being carried before the ecclesiastical judge, if he was arrested in his secular habit; but if he was a knight, and if he wore the habit of a knight instead of that of a clerk, he enjoyed all the immunities of the dignified clergy.

THE last distinct particularity belonging to the knights, was, that they should shave the crown of their heads; whether from
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the fear of being seized by the hair, if they lost their helmet in battle; or whether they found it inconvenient under the iron cap, and under the helmet, which they continually wore. Joinville says, in his manuscript of Lucques, “ When we were at Poitiers, I saw a knight named Messire Geoffroy de Rançon, who, for a great outrage done him by the count de la Marche, had sworn by his saints, that he would never be clipped like a knight, but would bear about his wrong like a woman, till he should behold himself revenged of the count de la Marche. And when Messire Geoffroy saw the count de la Marche, his wife and his children, kneel before the king, and cry out for mercy, he had a trestle brought in, or a piece of wood on four feet, to hold a table, book, and chafing-pan; took off his vow; and caused himself to be shaved immediately, in the presence of the king, the count de la Marche, and several others.”

THESE customs were not however uniformly adhered to; and the rules of Chivalry have varied, with respect to arms and habits, at particular periods, and in particular circumstances. The armorial ensigns on their shields, the streamers of their lances, and the banner which they sometimes wore on the top of the helmet, distinguished them from each other.—As it was originally from sovereign princes, or paramount lords, that they received their title and sword, they had made it a duty, on their reception into Chivalry, to adopt the achievements of those from whom they received their title; or at least to take some piece of their blazonry to add to that of their own family. But some knights, of an elevated ambition and refined turn of mind, would not take any devices till they had merited them by their own exploits: and if their shield had on it the blazon of their family, they put over it a housing, till, by the housing being torn
away

away in the combat or tournament, the race from whence they sprang might appear, to their praise and glory. The knights looked upon themselves as the children of those who had armed them; from whence the French word *adouber*, to dub, which was derived, says du Cange, from *adoptare*, to adopt.

ONE of the most ancient grants of coats of arms, was that of Richard, king of England, in favour of Geoffroi Troulart, lord of Joinville, who conferred on him this honour for his merit and service, and gave him his own arms, which he joined with his family's. It was from a similar motive of acknowledgment and respect, that the prince of Antioch, only sixteen years old, quartered his arms with those of St. Lewis, who made him a knight; and that several cities of France hold their arms from the king, as do the cardinals from the Pope. The desire of concealing the privilege of blazonry, was practised

practised by the knights-errant in particular, the first year of their promotion. As one of these adventurers, whose arms had been changed without his knowledge, made no answer to those who nominated and urged him to the joust, by the achievement or coat of arms they saw on his shield,—“ I am of opinion (said one) that you are of the knights of this year, who know not what arms you wear on your shield.”—The housing or case with which they covered their shield, was sometimes made of a sort of gimple or gauze, whiter than the lilly. Sometimes they painted it a single colour: thus we find, in ancient romance, one of the heroes staining his shield with the blood of a kid he had killed. But the first year of their reception, they were generally white, to imitate the example of the Knights of the Round Table. The shields painted of one single colour, whether on cloth or metal, and known, in the authors on heraldry, by the name of
stained

stained cloths, seem to have preserved the memory of those white shields; of which an ancient chronicler has transmitted a testimonial,

IN a combat given near Lisle, in Flanders, a knight in white arms was slain, who would not make known, when he engaged, what was his name; nor, on refusing to do this, surrender his arms to any intreaty. This obstinate determination to die, rather than reveal himself, proves that the author of the romance of *Perceforest* gives a just idea of the manners of those times in the discourse of his *Young Unknown*, who presents himself before Alexander. When this prince asks him in what country he was born,—“ I am not yet born,” said the young man. “ What is that you say?” answered the king. “ Sire (replied he) no man is born before he feels himself adorned with virtue.”—“ Truly, I agree to it (said the king); but at least tell me then your name.” — “ I have no more
name

name than country (replied the young man); I have not yet merited any; but all my desire is to obtain one."—Laurent du Pleffis seems to have taken up this romantic idea, in adopting for his country the place in which he was made a knight, the name of which he likewise took. Laurent being made a knight at Morf, beyond the sea, himself and children have taken the name of Morf. The romantic names of several personages, known in history, prove the design that some knights had to disguise themselves under borrowed names. In the list of knights in the courts of the kings of France, Charles the Fifth and Sixth, are a Lancelot, a Gadifer, a Carados; all heroes, described in the old romances. The allusion of the arms to the name of him who wore them, produced what was called *Armes Parlantes*; as that of Arpajon, whose name signified a player on the harp; and that was quite agreeable to the spirit of the ancient Armoriaists, though
suspected

suspected by some for the inventions of ignorant and vulgar people.

THE cross carried against the infidels; a lance, a sword, or any other piece of arms, taken at a tournament, or in a combat; a tower, a castle, and even the battlements and pallisadoes of ramparts forced or defended; with an infinity of other exploits of this kind, were the origin of the different figures on the shields, repeatedly marked, when the same exploits were renewed by the same knight. From whence it arises, that some figures were marked without end on a shield; as the heads of lances, called *Fleurs de Lys*, were originally on every shield of the kings of France: and some have gone so far as to say, that the very wounds given and received were added to and described on the shields of the knights. But what they thus put round them, seems rather designed to express the damage done to the shield in the different ways it was bruised
or

or flashed.—To the example of the royal shields, may be added those of the House of Montmorenci, so fruitful of great and noble characters. The sixteen eaglets on the arms of that House, are the glorious marks of two illustrious actions, done by two great men of that House, representing sixteen colours taken from the Imperial troops, on two memorable days of action, related by Arnaud, the famous advocate of France, in his public eulogy on Henry de Montmorenci. Matthew the Second de Montmorenci, having taken sixteen standards in the battle of Bovines, Philip Augustus, as a monument of this glorious victory, willed that this House should bear, ever after, sixteen eaglets instead of four, which belonged to their former achievement. The impossibility of placing more than three on the little or private seal, occasioned afterwards the reduction to that number, when they came to lose sight of the ancient principles of Chivalry. The arms were also changed
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or diminished, or even taken away at last, if the knight committed any great fault.

IN discoursing of Chivalry, we have already traced the idea of that judicious policy, of which a later age furnished a memorable example: A regiment of the French dragoons having carried off the kettle-drums from the enemy's cavalry, Lewis the Fourteenth granted them the privilege to bear kettle-drums at the head of their squadrons.—Punishments and privileges were thus ever proportioned to desert. The knights had some distinguishing advantages: they were dispensed from being on guard or in waiting, to which the pages and squires were always subject; and those men who belonged to a knight who came to reside in a city, could not be obliged to pay the taillage or quit-rent which the burghers had a right to raise from all new inhabitants. In ancient times, the most illustrious birth gave to the nobles no personal rank, unless they had the honour of knighthood; nor could

they have the seal, or set up the coat of arms of their father; and if they were contracting parties to any deed, they borrowed the seal of their mother, their tutor, friend or relation, or that of the court of justice in which the deed was ratified.

THE French nobility learned from the Germans to consider military service as the right from which they held their rank and obtained their arms. They wore a small seal on their finger in a ring, as the higher prelates have always done. Ec-card count d'Autun, says Laboureur, bequeathed three rings with engraven stones. The Monk of Vigeois relates, that, in a war between the viscount de Limoges and the count de Perigord, as the two armies went to battle, the count de Perigord was killed by the citizens of Pui; on which one of them, a rich man, took his horse, mounted it, and putting on his finger the ring of this lord, insulted the misfortune of his vassals, who remained without their head. And Chastie Mufart, in his eulogy
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on a knight exclaims, "He is good!—he is noble!—he wears the armorial shield!—he is honoured with the ring!" Historic monuments furnish us with many instances of this kind, among nobles of the highest rank. The regents of the kingdom of France anciently sealed with their own seal, and not with that of the minor king. Charles the Sixth, by his edict of 1407, changed this custom; commanding that all kings, his successors, whatever was their age of minority, should be intitled, after their fathers death, Kings of France, and be crowned and consecrated. He, therefore, who had not received knighthood, could not be represented on a seal, in his armour, holding in one hand the shield, and in the other a sword stretched out, as in the field, fighting on the day of battle; or hold lands, or do service for them in person, as a free man. But, however young, the moment he was created a knight, he received the honour of the seal; was emancipated; took rank among those to

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whom

whom the glory and administration of the state were confided; and with them became the prop and defence of the throne. Several sons of kings were anciently made knights from the cradle; and a great number, of inferior quality, at the age of fifteen or sixteen years: for as the condition of a knight implied that he was to be a judge, governor, and defender of others, it was a natural presumption that he should be capable of maintaining his own rights, and of governing himself. It was therefore necessary he should be free from servitude and constraint of every kind; and, conformably to the ancient privilege of the Roman soldiers, exempted from paying all taxes on provision or merchandize bought for his own use, or toll of any kind. His armour and equipage caused him to be distinguished at a distance; and at his approach the barriers and gates opened instantly to admit or to give him a free passage. The knight, on his part, preserved such order and discipline among those

those who followed in his train, that the country through which he passed had no disorder to complain of; or if any by accident was committed, he was responsible, and paid the full value for the damage: as has been related of the chevalier Bayard. If the fate of arms caused him to fall into the hands of his enemy, his dignity freed him from the chains that would have been the lot of any other prisoner. His word was the bond that retained him; and the faith of his oath procured him, though locked in his prison, called the Place of Courtesy, every alleviation and help that could mitigate the rigour of his situation.

We have seen that the higher barons, to induce a greater number of warriors to enlist under their banners, displayed a royal magnificence in the promotion of these knights. It is possible their treasures were exhausted by such profusions, or their ardour abated; and they judged it no longer necessary to gain, at so high a price, the numberless

recruits who pressed to serve them. It appears, at least, that those who received knighthood in succeeding ages, shewed, in their turn, the magnificence which had formerly been confined to the nobles.

It was, no doubt, on account of this expence, that the possessors of lands, called Lordships, when themselves or their eldest sons were to receive the honours of Chivalry, had a right to levy on their vassals and subjects, of the said lands, for the charges of their reception, one-fourth of the taillage their lands paid, which were called Aids of Chivalry : the other three were due to them on the marriage of their daughter ; on the payment of their own ransom, when freed from prison ; and on the ultramarine voyages they undertook. Philip le Bel and Francis the First issued out an ordinance for the levy of this aid ; Philip, for the knighthood of his son ; and Francis for the marriage of his daughter, and the knighthood of his son.—Bouteiller, the famous

famous civilian of the fourteenth century, terms the levy of aid from the nobles, a grant of courtesy; but adds, "It is the custom so to do indeed, and custom is inheritance, custom is right with some, and must be followed; but I counsel that the difference between the right of kings and the courtesy to nobles, may be evidently seen, not to give the same thing for the levy, but to change, and sometimes give it in a jewel, at others in a golden goblet." Madame de Sevigné, however, writing of the grand reception of M. de la Trimoille, in 1689, adds, "This was one of the occasions wherein they redoubled honours and rents, according to the right, from certain lands." And this was agreeable to the sense of La Roque and Du Cange, who consider these rights as legitimate, and according to the establishment of St. Louis, when they say, "If a gentleman marries his son, he ought to give him the third of his lands; and also when he is made a knight."

As in all orders of the state, so in the tribunals of justice, the title of Knight was particularly respected; it being presumed that those who bore it were always disposed to defend the cause of right. Moreover, knights could not be called to justice, but with all the caution and respect due to their dignity. If they obtained costs against their adversary, they were adjudged a larger recompence than was given to squires: but if they merited condemnation (so much the more culpable, as they owed to others the example of every virtue) they paid a double fine; and their families, who ought, it was supposed, to have restrained them, whether parents, brothers, or near relations, were included both in the penalty and the shame.—Agreeable to the proportion we have mentioned, it was ordered that the knights, at the siege of Dun-le-Roi, in 1411, should bear eight fascines, while four were only allotted to the squires.

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As knights were, from the moment of their creation, chiefs and counsellors in all affairs of justice, so they preserved a long time the exclusive privilege of possessing certain offices of the magistracy. That of Seneschal of Beaucaire being brought into parliament as a matter of contest, one of the competitors alledged that his adversary was not a knight. The emperor Sigismund, in whose presence this cause was pleaded, conferred knighthood on the disputed challenger, and by this means obtained him the office he demanded. They possessed also, on account of the ancient council of the kings having been formed of knights, the right of being employed in all public negotiations. If it was necessary to send ambassadors to treat of the most important affairs, either of peace or war, they chose always for each embassy, and in equal number, ecclesiastics and knights; and in after-times they added the same number of magistrates: — the third order was formed

when the office of judge was taken away from knighthood, which had originally exercised it. The Leaguers having sent a deputation to the Pope, in 1589, it was composed (says M. de Thou) of a knight, a counsellor of the parliament, and an abbé; this party affecting to follow the ancient forms of administration of the state so much the more zealously, as they departed from the primitive and fundamental laws of government.

BUT of all the rights belonging to a knight, the most noble, without doubt, was the privilege of creating other knights, even on the instant of his own promotion. This was in some sort participating the power and authority of sovereigns. Also, in the solemn festivals and assemblies, the knights had their tables particularly served by the squires; from which even the sons of kings were excluded, if they had not received knighthood. The most
3 powerful

powerful monarchs thought they could not inspire their children with too much respect, or mark too high an esteem themselves, for an order, to which the throne owed its chief lustre; nor would they ever be crowned without having received knighthood themselves. — A queen (says Perceforest) though very weak after sickness, would go out, even with great risk of her health, to meet a brave but poor knight, who was come to pay her a visit. The poor knight expressed to her the confusion into which he was thrown by this excess of courtesy from so great a princess: to which she replied, “To receive a poor knight with the same frankness and love as a rich one, is honour and delight.” — Robert, the second duke of Burgundy, prince of the blood, and first peer of France, qualified himself with the august title of knight, in his letters, 1272: and in the letters of M. Racine, it appears that, in the last century, the lords of the court testified their
veneration

reverence for even the image and shadow of ancient Chivalry, in the persons of the officers of justice, who had only the name. —Lewis the Eleventh, being attired, and on the point of receiving coronation, says Monstrelet, drew his sword, and gave it to duke Philip of Burgundy, praying him to make him a knight; which was a new thing; for it was commonly said, that all the sons of the kings of France were knights at the fountains of baptism; nevertheless the duke, in obedience to the orders of Lewis, gave him the dubbing and embrace, and made him a knight with his own hands. Charles the Seventh was also thus dubbed by the hands of the duke of Alençon; and Charles the Sixth, by the regent, duke of Anjou. The last monarch had early shewn his affection for Chivalry; when the king his father, who wished to prove his disposition, caused a crown of gold enriched with diamonds, and a helmet, to be set before him for his choice: “Sire (said the young prince, briskly)

briskly) give me the helmet, and keep you your crown." — To compleat the glory of this order, when they related the death of any single knight, they made use of the same terms of honour in speaking of him, and the number of his years, as it was the custom to do in respect of crowned heads.

If a knight was rich and powerful enough to furnish the state with a certain number of armed men, and to entertain them at his own expence, they granted him the permission of adding to the simple title of Knight, or Knight Bachelor, the more noble and exalted title of Knight Banneret. This gave them the distinction of carrying a square banner at the top of their lance; whereas that of a simple knight was extended in two cornets or points, as the flags set up in France, on the festivals of the church: and besides his own shield, the banneret had the use of many shields of other knights for his defence. The same cere-

menies were used at his being made a banneret, as at the institution of barons, viscounts, counts, marquisses, and dukes ; and they claimed of right the same rank that was expressed on their coats of arms, helmets, crests, caps, torses, labels, supporters, girdles, coronets, and shields. Most of these pieces, originally worn, in the public ceremonies, by those to whom they belonged, made a part of their head armour and habiliments. Even their dwellings, agreeable to the spirit of the age, had battlements and towers, serving both for the defence of their castles, and to mark the nobility of their owners. But a Gentleman, the title given to one who was nobly descended, had alone the privilege of expressing on his flag, or of blazoning the achievements of his house.

THE banners of the knights in the battles, and the streamers they held in their hands when they entered the lists, and with which they made the sign of the cross before they begun the jousts (and which

which they sometimes fixed afterwards at the top of their casques) probably gave rise to the vanes placed at the tops of houses. In the enterprize of Saintr , himself and his companions wore on their helmets two banners, between which was a diamond, destined to be the reward of those who might prove their victors. Saintr  having also proposed a Pas d'Armes to the English, between Gravelines and Calais, which was accepted by the count of Bouquincan and his companions,—on the Sunday, the first day of the month, and entrance on this exploit, arrived the said lord and count of Bouquincan, in the morning, after saying of mass, and a brave company with him, who had placed on the highest wing of the house his banner, which he brought from England, bordered with silver; and commanded that they should cry aloud, “England! Saint George!”—The insides of their houses were still more distinguished by the variety of ornaments which adorned their furniture,
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and which denoted their rank ; as the form of the noble signals on the top, whether in the shape of pennons or banners, indicated that it was a knight, or knight banneret, to whom they belonged. The rendering due honours to all, according to their ranks, was observed with the most exact regularity in every assembly of the nobles ; and the impossibility (but from command of royalty on any singular occasion) to hold any other place, extinguished all that disorderly ambition, which, confounding these just rules, introduces those into honour, who have only riches, and neither merit nor services to support their exaltation. — On the wedding of Charles the Seventh, Madame de Namur was seated at dinner below all the countesses except one: in the midst of the dinner the king came where she sat, and said to her, “ Madam, you have been seated as wife of the count of Namur ; but the remainder of this dinner you must sit as my cousin-german.” She was then brought

brought up to the table of the queen, and after grace was said, she returned into her own place. The said Madame de Namur (adds the countess of Poitiers) related to me, that never before, at any king's marriage, were so many princes or noble dames as on that day; and all the ladies dined in the hall where the king dined, but no man was allowed to sit down there. Madame my mother also told me (adds the countess) she had heard Madame de Namur say, that when Monsieur the duke Philip married Madame Michell, his first wife, who was daughter of the king of France, Monsieur duke John, the father of duke Philip, would always serve the sweetmeats and spiced wines to her, but she would not suffer it; nevertheless he always knelt before her, called her Madame, and she called him Father.—When the duchess Isabella of Portugal came to the king and queen of France, to spend seven weeks, she never dined with either of them; but Madame
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the dauphiness came often to the apartments of Madame the duchess, and stayed with her two or three days. My mother, who was present, observed, they served Madame the dauphiness under cover, as was the custom to do to persons of the highest rank; the dishes, the salt, the pepper, the spices, and sweetmeats, all were covered; and when the dauphiness had washed with two basons, they brought the duchess a single bason, and ewer, and a napkin, who having used it gave it to the squire who carved; and when she rose from table, she knelt down at the feet of the dauphiness, and in all things shewed as great honour to her as to the queen."

IN a manuscript, intituled The Honours of the Court, these different degrees of honour, and the splendid ornaments which adorned the rooms and beds of state, in the house of the duke of Burgundy,—sideboards, tables, and cupboards,—are minutely

mutely given. They were charged with vessels of crystal, ornamented with gold and precious stones ; cups and pots, plates and dishes, of pure gold ; basons and comfit-boxes, of gold and precious stones : a pair of the latter, belonging to duke Philip of Burgundy, were valued at seventy thousand crowns, and were always on the sideboard, covered with napkins, as were the rest of the massy and valuable ornaments. The most magnificent sideboards were in four divisions or degrees, ascending one above the other ; each degree covered with fine napkins. At the top of this of the duke of Burgundy, was a cloth of gold and crimson, bordered with black velvet ; and on the black velvet was worked the device of my lord the duke of Burgundy ; which device was a fusil. This cloth was formed as a tester of a bed ; but the top part was only a quarter, or at the most half a yard wide, with cornices and fringe, as at the top of the beds of state. And the cloth of gold, behind the sideboard table,

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hung down from the top to the bottom, at each side ornamented a quarter deep with a border, which was also on the top, and was of a different colour from the rest. Two state beds, in the houses of princes and those of royal blood, were placed under one tester, with a passage five feet wide between each. At the end of the passage, next the bolster of each bed, was a great chair with a high back : a couch was also before the fire, which ran on rollers, if need were, under the beds of state. A curtain of demi-fattin went round the two beds at top, but did not extend to the bottom or feet curtains; nor did these join each other by near the distance of the said passage. The fringes and fattin, in royal houses, were green. The three curtains at top and bottom ran on rings, and could be drawn together and undrawn at will; so that the passage between the two beds was not discerned. In the middle of the two state beds, was a curtain of the same kind, tied up to the top, and fastened at
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the bottom above the chair; and this curtain was never drawn. There were the same curtains to the little bed, or couch, round a square pavilion of the size of the bed. The chambers of princes were hung with green silk at top, and at bottom with tapestry to the door. The beds, great and small, were covered with spotted ermine; and the inside was of fine violet-coloured plush, which, when put on the bed, hung down on the ground a yard and a half deep. Above these coverings was a starched crape, which trained longer still; and the beds were all turned down; but the ermine covers went so high, that the sheets were not to be seen, except at the bolster, which was also covered with crape. Each bed had a pillow on the bolster, three quarters long, and two quarters wide. The chair between the beds was covered from top to bottom with cloth of gold and crimson, and had a cushion of the same. In this chamber of the duke of Burgundy, was also a sideboard (as has been de-

scribed) and on it two great candlesticks of silver, with wax-lights always burning; and a table, near the sideboard in a corner, to receive the pots and cups, in which drink was given to the royal guests, who came to see the daughter of duke Philip, in her lying-in, after they had been served with the comfit-box, which was then replaced on the sideboard.

THE room for the infant (afterwards duchess of Austria) had, in the same manner, two great beds; and the cradle in which she lay was before the fire; but there was no couch. There was a pavilion round the cradle; the coverings of the cradle were as of the great beds, and trained on the floor. In the entrance, or state-chamber, to these rooms, was only one bed, with crimson sattin; the covering the same; and at the top, on each cornice, was a great sun, embroidered with fine gold in tapestry, given by the people of Utrecht to duke Philip. The hanging

ing of the outward state-room was red silk; the curtains crimson, some tied up: the bed made, not as to sleep in, with a crimson pillow. At the end of the room, far away from the bed, was a side-board table, of three degrees, very high and wide, all covered with great flaggons and pots, and vessels of silver gilt with gold, cups, and comfit-boxes; each degree and all round covered with fine napkins. At the head of the bed was a little chair, covered with velvet, and on it a cushion of gold cloth.

AGREEABLE to these particulars, given by the countess of Poitiers, was the etiquette observed in every thing among the nobles; and with respect to subordinate situations, there were the most exact regulations, suited to each. The frequent occasions, in these ages, of assembling a vast number of persons of all conditions, called for the most exact punctuality in the arrangement of them. At the tour-

naments and proofs of combat, or list fights, places were appointed for the lord of the festival, the marshal, the nobles, and counsellors ; for the strangers of rank, according to their degree ; for the citizens, merchants, and gentry.—When, in the fourteenth century, the prerogatives of the nobles began to be usurped by the increase of riches to individuals, the just regulations, that before took place, became less attended to, and much inconvenience arose from it to society. Eustache Deschamps censures this alienation of rank and honour from the just possessors, who, by education, or merit of service, had alone obtained it. “ In my time (says he) when they went into the church to make offering and to kiss the Pax, dame went first, then demoiselle, burgessees and wives came after. But now, alack, is grief and woe ! riches swelled with pride ; pitiful trickster, caitif vile, thrusts into place with open shame, before a man of high descent.”

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IN Chivalry, where the form of government was military, individuals often acquired great riches by booty, and ransoms in war, which were distributed usually after the engagements. Gold, silver, horses, palfreys, and mules, were divided among the knights; other prizes were given to the squires, and inferior attendants: which caused the romancers, who gave the picture of these times, to observe often, that knights took neither cows nor sheep. A prisoner's ransom was commonly a year's revenue, conformable to the right of redemption of noble lands. A knight, who by merit had gained himself a name, was paid court to by the greatest lords and ladies; nay, even princes, princesses, kings, and queens, pressed forward to serve and enroll him, as it were, in the rank of their hereditary descent, and to inscribe him in the list of heroes, who had been the ornament and support of their house, under the title of Knight of Honour. Montluc,

in the year 1555, mentions the dependence he had on taking a young Roman nobleman, so rich, that he possessed four-score thousand crowns of annual rent. "A year's revenue (adds he) is my just claim." Officers, made prisoners, paid the half of their salary.—The magnificence of princes and nobles consisted, in great part, in the multitude of knights continually surrounding their persons. "Handsome, wise, and well prepared (says Eustache Deschamps) lived the lord, from morn to night, in a castle large and fine, with wholesome air, and choice delights; valiant knights attended him, when he went and when he came, obeyed his will, and served his guests." Possibly he meant the knights of honour, or body knights, who always attended the person of their lord. We read, in Perceforest, that a great number of lords and gentlemen had caused helmets to be placed over the doors of their castles, to serve as a signal to the knights

knights who should pass by, and announce to them that they should always find a welcome reception in a house, whose master would consider himself as honoured in receiving such guests. Some of these helmets are yet to be seen on the ancient edifices in France, particularly in the country; and knights were not only most courteously received, and treated with every mark of consideration by these generous nobles, but they and their train had every expence defrayed, and, when they went away, were loaded with presents.

PERCEFOREST speaks of this custom being used in England. "Then it was, that in Great Britain charity of manners reigned in all; noble dames and gentle knights placed on the top of their castles an helmet, as a sign that all good knights and worthy ladies, travelling that way, should enter as freely into their castle, as if it were their own. The presents made were arms, costly robes, horses, and even money;

money ; to knights double the sum given to the squires ; as also to bannerets as much again as to knights batchelors : and this proportion was observed in the same cases among the heralds, minstrels, &c. The greatest lords accepted, without any scruple, this sort of liberality ; not considering it so much a personal gift, as the associating them in the enterprizes and glory of knighthood. But the courtesy they learned in these castles was above all riches : no spirit of discord or peevishness was ever allowed in these knights to one another ; their manners displayed every kind of friendship and good-will."

Joinville says, that he dismissed one of his knights, who had struck his comrade ; which shews what was the authority of the lord over his knights, and their dependence on him who commanded them. Sometimes a knight was in the service of several courts, as was seen in the palace of prince Edward of England.—Bishops also, as persons of rank, had knights attached to them.—Pe-

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ter de Blois, writing to two of his friends who were attached to the bishop of Chartres, exhorts them to represent often to that prelate, how far he had wandered from his duty ; above all, in the abuse he made of his riches, in squandering them on buffoons ; and recommends earnestly to them, to inspire him with a love of merit.—The present given by the duke of Anjou to the duke of Bourbon, Lewis, the third of that name, who had assisted him in the war of Guienne, consisted of thirty thousand gold franks, and was looked upon as the subsidy of a prince to his ally. The duke of Anjou paid the attendants of the duke of Bourbon for a month, and made rich presents to the knights who accompanied him, of vessels of silver and silk stuffs ; and one of them received a steed, valued at two thousand crowns. The count De Foix gave to the brother of Boucicaut, who came to see him, after much good cheer and entertainment, two hundred florins, and a fine
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red palfrey. The liberalities of the count de Foix were so great, that a description of them, as given by Froissart, would almost be endless. His reception of the duke of Bourbon was magnificent; feasts the most superb; mules, palfreys, coursers, and money, were presented to him; the latter was refused by the duke, the other presents retained; the squires alone received presents in florins. A spirit of natural ardour and equity reigned in the distinctions of all these things.—Perhaps these principles of distributive justice were derived from the Romans, or from the proportion observed in the Salique Law, with respect to the amercements and gifts of persons, according to their different classes.

IN the history of Lewis the Third, duke of Bourbon, we read, “ The day of kings came, in which the duke made great feasts and entertainments; and searched out for the poorest child in all the city, of whom

whom to make a king. He then caused the child elected to be dressed in a royal robe, gave him officers as governors, and the next day invited him to dine at his own table of honour. After dinner came his maitre d'hotel, who gathered for the poor king; to whom Lewis gave forty livres to put him to school, the knights of his court a frank, and the squires half a frank; so that the sum often mounted up to a hundred franks; which they gave to the father or mother of those poor children, who were thus made kings in turn, and plentifully fed, that they might be taught at school, and become worthy of honour. Thus did the valiant Lewis of Bourbon, for the love and reverence of God; and kept up this noble custom to the last year of his life."

THE magnificent rewards bestowed in Chivalry on the knights, were the origin of several lordships and fiefs; and not only enriched, but raised these warriors from

an obscure estate to the highest honours. “ Clignet of Brabant (says the Monk of St. Denys) was made admiral, though he possessed no right to it from his rank, nor from the valour of his ancestors; and he married the countess of Blois, which raised him from a state of miserable indigence to ease and splendour.”

ALL the writings of the romancers were filled with precepts to the great, in favour of indigent knights; beseeching the former to consider their virtues, to supply their wants, and raise them to the rank they merited. A castle, or a yearly sum, was frequently conferred on a new-made knight; who became the vassal of his patron, and often served him and his knights at table.

“ WHEN the king of England (says Froissart) had passed the river of Escaut, and set foot on the kingdom of France, he called Henry of Flanders to him, his

young page, made him a knight, and gave him two hundred livres sterling of revenue each year : he also assigned him a sufficiency and wealth in England."

THE tournaments, which often ruined the great lords by the excessive expence attending them, became a source of riches for poor knights. In the distresses of an urgent war, there were no bounds to the liberality of the prince, in his rewards to the knights who had shewn valour in his service ; and if brave, a knight who was disengaged from any immediate service, might be said to put sovereigns to contribution : also, in duels that were fought in the cause of a powerful lord or lady, no favour was deemed sufficient, sometimes not even the participation of their whole fortune, to reward the champion who had sustained their honours, recovered their lands, or obtained revenge of their adversary.

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IN the assault made on Pontoise, by Charles the Sixth, in 1441, besides conferring the honour of knighthood, he ennobled the first knight who mounted the tower of Frise, and for his valour extended the honour to his posterity; and gave him rich gifts to maintain the rank to which he had raised him. Edward, prince of Wales, after the victory he gained at Poitiers, gave five hundred marks of yearly revenue to James Endelée, who had distinguished himself in this action; and retained him as his own knight. As the latter immediately divided this gift among four of his body squires, who had never quitted his side during the battle,—the prince of Wales, being informed of it, gave him six hundred marks more. These generous actions are to be noted in many other princes.

A KNIGHT also, who rendered himself the superior of a rich lord by skill in combat, set what price he pleased on the liberty

liberty of the vanquished. “ A squire of Picardy (says Froissart) pursued by an English knight banneret at the defeat of Poitiers, having forced him to surrender, made him, in the end, pay six thousand nobles ; and thus, from a poor squire, he became a great and wealthy knight.” And many, after they killed their adversaries, obliged their parents and friends to purchase, at a high price, the mangled and bloody bodies, and the spoils left in possession of the victor. At a sally made at the siege of Rouen, in 1418, the bodies of the killed were redeemed at four hundred nobles. Some knights, however, used their victories with more moderation, agreeable to the original precepts of Chivalry ; or, if they did not, their chiefs made memorable examples of them for their inhumanity.

HISTORY has preserved the noble speech of the duke of Lancaster, when he banished for ever from his court a

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disloyal knight, whose arms and horse he abandoned to Du Guesclin, and whom he mulcted at a thousand livres: "I have no pleasure (said the duke) in people who are guilty of treason, nor are we accustomed to such in our country;—the garden of war is fruitful of game, but not open to beasts of prey."

It was from these heroic principles, that a young lady, left a rich heiress without protectors,—or a widow, with extensive lands fallen to her possession,—would call to her succour some knight of known valour and worth; and confide to him, with the title of Viscount or Castellan, the guardianship of her castle and her fiefs, and the command of her foldiers maintained for their defence; of which obligations she would sometimes acquit herself, by rewarding with her hand the knight who had faithfully served her.

FROISSART says, in relating the amours of Eustache d'Auberticourt with Madame Isabella de Juliers, "She often sent him horses, for a reward of his valour, and at last crowned the faithful exploits of this her servant by giving him her hand in marriage." Such marriages were generally contracted from the advice, and under the favour of sovereigns, born the protectors of the noble orphans and widows of their states: in conciliating the interests of both, they fulfilled at the same time the office of royal guardians, and generous rewarders of the brave knights in their court: and from this noble attention the most powerful houses in France date their origin, and acquired the immense revenues they possess. Besides the brilliant fortune of Clignet de Brabant, which he owed in part to the favour of the duke of Orleans, history furnishes several examples of warriors, who, even in the flower of youth, commanded the greatest armies, and performed the highest enterprizes, of

those times. Boucicaut, at the age of twenty-five, was marechal of France; and Louis de la Tremouille, the knight without reproach, was only twenty-eight when he was invested with the dignity of lieutenant-general to the king of France; a rank superior to that of the marechals of France. He gained the battle of St. Aubin de Cormier, and made the duke of Orleans prisoner.—To employ thus early young men, born with the genius and talents for war, was, as it were, to multiply valiant officers; for one such able general, by pursuing his full career, did more than many officers in succession could possibly have performed. From having remained at the head of his armies, for a length of time, he had acquired the confidence of his soldiers; and by his first atchievements had inspired them with high respect for his valour and skill. He had likewise learnt to profit from experience in the conduct of the plan of war he had conceived; and the
system,

system of military discipline he had formed, becoming less exposed to alterations, could be more surely executed and brought to entire perfection.

FROM the view of Chivalry, in the life of the knight, and the honours it conferred on worth, we must depart for a moment, and, before we proceed to the closing scene of his death, submit to the painful view of that degradation, which those who sullied the eclat of knighthood were doomed to undergo; and in which may be remarked many features similar to the punishments inflicted by the prelates of the church. The knight, who was juridically condemned for his crimes, was instantly led to a scaffold, where they dashed in pieces before him all his different pieces of armour, and his arms; his shield, from which they had razed his coat of arms, was suspended at the tail of a mare; it was turned upside down, and dragged ignominiously through the dirt:

its being inverted, was a mark that the person to whom it belonged was dead; for every knight dishonoured by treachery, by indolence, or any ignoble conduct, was considered as a dead body, stripped of all feeling and sentiment. Kings, heralds, and pursuivants at arms were employed in pronouncing against the culprit the atrocious injuries he had been guilty of; and the priests were also summoned, who, after having recited the prayers for the dead, pronounced over his head the hundred and ninth Psalm; in which are several maledictions against traitors. Three times the king or the herald at arms demanded the name of the criminal; and each time the pursuivants at arms resounded his name. The herald replied, *that* was not the name of him who stood before them, since he was disloyal and a traitor. Then taking from the hands of the same pursuivants a bason filled with hot water, he poured it with indignation on the head of the unworthy

worthy knight, to efface for ever the sacred character that had been conferred on him. The wretched knight was then dragged to the bottom of the scaffold by a cord passed under his arms, and put on a hurdle or hand-barrow, covered with a pall; after which he was carried to the church, where the same prayers and ceremonies were said over him as over the dead. Nothing certainly could be more horrible—not even the aspect of the most dreadful death—to a knight in whom the smallest spark of sentiment remained; and the idea of such an ignominy was sufficient to retain the weakest-minded soul in the discharge of his duty, if higher views could not inspire him with a more perfect virtue.—Tacitus gives a similar account of the Germans. They hung up traitors and deserters on trees; cowards, and others guilty of notorious crimes, were thrown into ditches and marshes, and covered with mud; to denote that common crimes

should be exposed for example, infamous ones buried in oblivion.

AT the siege of Montcontour, Du Guesclin having engaged to pay an Englishman a certain sum of money for the ransom of one of his soldiers, by an obligation sealed with his own seal, to be discharged from the revenue of his lands; this Englishman, not receiving the money, through the neglect of Du Guesclin, who in the hurry of his affairs had forgotten his engagement, caused the arms of Du Guesclin to be painted, dragged through the mud, and hung up bottom upwards, to denote that Du Guesclin was perjured. The city was taken, and the Englishman was dragged, in his turn, and hung up in the same place in which he had hung up the shield of Du Guesclin. The latter agreed that his creditor had a just right to seize his lands, and distrain his goods, after the expiration of the term fixed for payment; but not to insult him as he had done.

done. This was however a penalty to which the knights obliged themselves to submit in the contracting such engagements.

IN some particular cases, where promises, held ever inviolable, were not broken,—or where cowardice was not concerned, which by the French, as well as the Germans, was considered as the most ignoble of all vices,—the culprit was allowed to expiate his crime by actions that might be capable of healing his wounded honour: and this was a policy full of humanity, and most skilfully and wisely employed by the marechal de Turenne, who by this means drew singular advantages to himself, and to the state he served, even from the errors committed. For crimes that were less atrocious, but still dishonourable, the knight offending was excluded from the table of the other knights; and if he dared to place himself there, each of them had a
right

right to come and cut off the table-cloth from before him.

THERE is some allusion to this in an anecdote given by Joinville. The knights had been ill treated by the hospitalers : Joinville demanded justice of the master, who consented to give him satisfaction : it consisted in finding the authors of the outrage when they should be sat down on their cloaks to eat, that the offended knights might come and take their cloaks away. When Joinville and his men presented themselves, to execute the conditions agreed on, and make the brother hospitalers rise from off their cloaks,—on their refusing to do so, the knights did themselves justice by taking their places to eat with them ; which obliged the hospitalers to retire to another table, and leave them in possession of their cloaks. It is well known that no justice is more severely executed than that which people of the same condition exercise on one another ;

another; for then the common interest becomes the interest of each individual.

It is to be observed, likewise, that if a knight, banished from the table of the other knights, had recourse to that of the squires, he would have exposed himself to the same affront from this inferior order. "A knight," says Lancelot de Lac, "who was considered as a criminal, because he had been seen in a cart, arrived at the court of king Artus, and went to the table of the knights; but not one would permit him to take place with them. Refused through every row, he repaired to that of the squires; but was drove out of doors with ignominy, and obliged to spread his tablecloth on the bare earth." Bertrand du Guesclin was the restorer of this ancient regulation, to preserve in his command, as constable, the true discipline of ancient Chivalry, too much relaxed in his time.

HAVING

HAVING thus conducted the knight from his childhood through the course of his life, declared his prowess, recorded his fame,—there remains only to speak of his last hours, and the honours shewn him at the obsequies of his funeral. When nature, vigorously exerted for many years, became exhausted, and the knight was no longer capable of the toils he had undergone, he first retired from the tournaments, as the least necessary of his arduous undertakings.—“At the jousts,” says the historian of Lewis the Twelfth, “given in the presence of all the court at Paris, in the street of St. Anthony, there were many great feats performed; and among others the noble actions of my lord Clerieux, the more signalized for his valour on this day, as he was in the decline of life. In the course of lances, he brought to the earth a gentleman of Picardy; himself and horse came rolling together on the ground. This victory gained, he caused himself
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to be disarmed ; reposed between two fine sheets ; and sent his helmet to a lady at Paris, praying her to keep it for his sake ; adding, that for his part, he had finished the career of valour her beauty had inspired ; and that he would be found in joust and tournament no more." If living to the full age of man, it was with more difficulty the knight entirely forsook the profession of war ; and it was with grief he availed himself of the melancholy provision for age the law had accorded him.

WHEN the final stroke of death had sealed his eyes in darkness, and for ever extinguished that ardour and prowess for which the knight had rendered himself so redoubted, the attendants put on his body his whole armour : and at the funerals of barons, and knights of peculiar dignity, they put on the bed of state, which was borne in the pomp of the funeral, a living man, armed from head
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to foot, to represent the person of the deceased.

IN the charges of the house for the counts of Polignac, it is recorded, that in 1375, five sols were given for having personated the dead knight, at the funeral of John, son of the Viscount of Polignac.—The English, in 1591, at the siege of Rouen, with Henry the Fourth, reserved for the colonel of their infantry a funeral pomp, well worthy of ancient Chivalry; the spirit of which was long preserved in that nation. As this brave colonel, nephew of the earl of Essex, was killed in an attack at the head of his troops, the English put his body in a leaden coffin, and kept it till their departure. “We will make it enter the city through a breach, if an occasion by assault presents (say they), that we may transport our leader by the same way he would have conducted us, if death had not stopped his course.” But obtaining
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not the means of conferring on their chief this honour, they carried back his corpse to England.

THOSE who died after having undertaken a crusade, though they had not accomplished it, were carried to the grave armed, their legs crossed the one over the other: they were represented on their tombs in the same attitude, as is to be seen in the cloisters of the ancient monasteries of France and Flanders, and in many other places. “ The body of my Lord Corneille, Bastard of Burgundy (says Olivier de la Marche) who was killed in the pursuit of the Ghentois, was conveyed to Bruffells, and the duchess of Burgundy had it honourably interred at St. Goule; for she loved him right well for his good virtues; and ordered that on his bier should be laid his banner, his standard, and his flag. Toison D’ Or, king at arms, said afterwards, that it belonged not to any one, but him who died

in battle, to have these three ensigns of honour at his funeral; only one, or at most two of them.

THUS the glory of knights followed them to their tombs; and the signal marks which decorated their bier, and were placed on their mausoleums, were testimonials of gratitude, on the part of the nation by whom they were decreed, towards the hero who had so ably defended them. For himself they remained an immortal recompence of his labours; for his family, an illustrious honour, the brightness of which they were never to fully; and for Chivalry itself, an animating example, exciting a noble flame, to tread in the same glorious paths, and merit the same splendid distinctions. The amiable chevalier Bayard had in view these honours, when he thus addressed himself to his redoubted sword, with which Francis the First had just received the dubbing at his hands: “Thou
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art blessed, O my sword! to have given so great, so excellent a king the order of Chivalry! In truth, my good sword, thou shalt be guarded as a relic, and above all others famed and honoured." Having spoken thus, he leapt twice in token of joy; and then bowing low to and kissing his sword, he replaced it in its scabbard.

As formerly the arms of Achilles excited the ambition of the Grecian chiefs, so did the knights desire to possess the weapons, and above all the swords, of their illustrious predecessors, to use them in the day of battle, hang them up in their arsenals and tilting-rooms, as curious monuments of ancient valour; or dedicate them in the churches, from motives of religion. The duke of Savoy sought, with the most unwearied diligence, for the sword of the chevalier Bayard, to place it in his palace; but not being able to obtain it, he put in the place thereof all his other massy arms, which he gained

with infinite intreaty from Charles du Motet, lord of Chichiliane, a brave and wise gentleman of Dauphine, who had kept them in the highest preservation. The duke wrote him a letter in very obliging terms, praying him to make him a present of these precious arms: "I will cherish them in honour of Chivalry (adds he) and place them in the choicest room of my palace; and when I gaze with transport at these noble ensigns of valour, my joy will receive but one alloy, the reflecting they are now in the possession of one who is so much less worthy of this inestimable treasure, than their first kind preserver." In the time of Charles the Seventh, in the great adversities of France, it was thought necessary, for its restoration, to choose one of these ancient swords, with which to arm the Maid of Orleans.

"In the church of St. Catharine de Fierbois were found (says Savaron) several ancient swords;" among which was that

famous sword, so fatal to the English, said to have been that of Charlemagne, which drove them out of France, and which was afterwards placed among the relics of the church of St. Denys. It was agreeable to the piety with which the knights entered into this sacred character, in their first dedication at the altar, to place these weapons of honour in the churches, at the close of life. Thus devoting to God, the only Author of true courage, and every virtue, the sword they had employed in the defence of Religion, and the good of the state.

PART V.

HAVING gone through the description of Chivalry, of which there subsists only the vestiges in the present orders of regulars or monks, it only remains to relate the inconveniencies and the abuses that arose in this once noble institution, and which became a counterbalance to its advantages and honour.

THE ages in which Chivalry flourished, it will be said by some, were ages of barbarity and horror, of public robbery, and private licentiousness; and that these vices were found in the knights, who at that time were set up as heroes. Peter de Blois, a satirist of the twelfth century, speaks of their sumptuary horses bending

bending under the load of utensils and ammunitions for voluptuousness: instead of being charged with the arms and baggage necessary to war, they are, in truth, adds he, covered over with shields, where gold glitters on every side; and just as shining and as whole as they brought them are they carried back. Their saddles, however, and their helmets, are adorned with pictures, which represent the combats of Chivalry. These fine images transport them with admiration; but it is in paintings only they dare to look on war.—The paintings here spoken of evidently indicate the origin of achievements, or coats of arms.

IN contempt also of Chivalry, the count of Champagne, in 1231, declared, that he confided more in the lowest of his citizens than in his knights. Nor did those of this order, who were devoted to the exact performance of religious rites, escape the censure of the satirists; they

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were taxed with simony. In the houses of hospitalers, and others destined to humiliation, to poverty, and charity, they were accused of pride, opulence, and idleness; and that the faith they professed was fraud and treachery. Nor are the recitals of historians wanting in summing up the unjust actions of many heroes; their employing in their train troops of robbers, as the ministers of their ambition and vengeance: and they reproach them also with intestine broils and wars, occasioned by their private animosities. St. Lewis made the severest laws to extinguish these feuds; yet the civil wars, under the reigns of the princes of the House of Valois, armed the most powerful lords, and the most valiant knights, against each other. Such were the allegations against this noble institution.

BUT though from the bosom of friendship, and the union of brotherhood, there issued some monsters, who opposed the
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laws by which they arrived at the dignity of knighthood; there were many who published its fame, and secured its glory. Vidal, in speaking of the knights who succeeded those employed by Henry king of England, and his three sons, gives to ancient Chivalry the highest honour. And another satirist says, "This order anciently was so respectable, that to dare to censure it, would be a satire on myself; but the white wolf (adds he, alluding to a popular tradition in his age) has devoured all the loyal and brave knights; be not therefore surprised the race of them is lost."

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS, who wrote in the reigns of king John, Charles the Fifth, and Charles the Sixth, complains bitterly against the Chivalry of his age, compared with that of the preceding, that it was declining, and would soon come to ruin. "Knights anciently (says he) were loyal, secret, fond, and brave!

Each one, with his dame and friend, lived in bond of harmony, free from censure, free from vice: but now they jangle, now they lye; nor live as those in ancestry."

IT is certain that Chivalry, in the first ages of it, tended to promote order and good morals; and though in some respects imperfect, yet produced the most accomplished models of public valour, and of those pacific and gentle virtues, that are the ornament of domestic life: and it is worthy of consideration, that in ages of darkness, most rude and unpolished, such examples were to be found, from adhering to the laws of an institution founded solely for the public welfare, as in the most enlightened times have never been surpassed, and very rarely equalled.

MEN are weak; there is a wide road between speculation and practice. In the
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most regular states, the numbers of those who live conformable to its laws, are the few, not the many, except in the very first establishment of these states. Time introduces innovations and abuses; but these ought to be imputed to individuals, not to the profession they have embraced. Chivalry had, in this respect, the fate of all other institutions; and, to disguise no truth unfairly, it was liable to some inconveniencies in its own system, which shall be mentioned. To consider it then on the side of war: In what disorder must an impetuous soldiery fight, whose courage was their law; and whose ambition was to multiply the dangers that surrounded them? From the time of their war with the Albigenſes, the French were reproached with the making a sport of danger, and braving death. “ They are contented (says an Albigenſe captain) with arming their bodies; they disdain to defend their legs, and they wear only stockings when they go to battle. This was considered

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as extreme temerity in an age when armour was in use: and we know that among the Romans and Lacedæmonians, excess of courage was punished as cowardice. The soldiery, who were thus rash, must be often incapable of rallying, to repair the errors it might lead them to commit, or the losses it might cause them to sustain. Also, the different interests of the lords paramount, and the different ranks of knights under them, were likely to cause much confusion: the power of the former would often clash with the officers belonging to the king; and from the combinations of these different powers, some nearly equal in rank, all rivals of each other in fame, authority might be weakened by participation, and observance of the laws eluded by different pretexts in the knights: or, by the covert of indulgence to their vassals, the latter might escape the punishment of disobedience in their duty. Experience shews this in the wars of the English, whose bloody rival-

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ships, and headstrong soldiery, are striking proofs of the inconveniencies of any system that neglects letters, to attend solely to arms.

LET us now pass to a view of the knights errant, and see of what use they appear to have been in these dark ages.— Among these were the Knights of the Round Table, so famous in the romances that depicture those times. The martial Boucicaut went to the Holy Land as a knight errant, and combated the Saracens, says Godfrey his historian. These heroes, in imitation of Hercules and Theseus, visited distant countries, to redress wrongs, revenge the oppressed, and exterminate robbers. “ The barbarity of those dark ages (says La Colombiere) required the succours of such redoubted champions ; and they were even of use in succeeding times, not sufficiently cleared from ferocity, to do without their aid.”

BRAN.

BRANTOME confirms particularly the custom of knight errantry, in the recital of the enterprize of the Lord Galeas, of Mantua. In acknowledgment of the honour done to him by queen Joan of Naples, who had taken him out to dance with her, he made a vow to run over the world, till he had conquered two knights, to present to her majesty. At the end of a year, which he had employed in fighting in every country through which he passed, in England, Spain, Germany, Hungary, having overcome two knights, he brought them with him, and presented them, kneeling at her feet, to the queen, as the accomplishment of his vow. "The queen gave them their freedom, with a generosity (says Brantome) far different from that shewn by the canons of St. Peter's at Rome. A knight, under the like vow, having sent another knight he had taken, with his arms, horse, and all his spoil, to the church, the priests liked them so well, that they would never part

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with

with any one of them, but retained them all; and made the poor knight their captive for the remainder of his life."

It appears from this anecdote, that Chivalry, in a similar case, acted by more equitable and noble laws. These wandering heroes, the knights errant, resided principally in forests, without any other equipage than that which was necessary for the defence of their persons. They lived wholly on venison; and on flat stones (placed expressly for the purpose of these knights errant in the forests) they roasted and eat their meat: the bucks they killed were put on these stone tables, and covered over with other stones, which they pressed down on them, to squeeze out the blood; from whence this meat was called Pressed Kid, Food of Heroes! Salt and some spices, the only munition they charged themselves with, were all the seasoning they used.—The laws of these foresters were, to march in small companies,

panies, sometimes only three or four together, that they might surprize the more readily the enemies they fought; taking care, that they might not be known, to change or disguise their achievements by covering them. A year and a day was the ordinary term of their enterprize; on their return, they were upon oath to relate faithfully their adventures, and ingenuously confess their faults and misfortunes.

THE eagerness and joy of the ladies and young gentlewomen to receive them on their return, was inexpressible; and it is easy to believe, what the authors of these times assert, that kings have refused crowns, to apply themselves more freely to these benevolent pursuits of knight-errantry. “ Queen Elizabeth wished (says M. de Thou) to receive a homage that should, as in these ancient times, be addressed to her solely for her own sake. She was pleased to exercise her imagination

tion with recalling the memory of these knights errant, who run over the world, animated solely with the desire of pleasing those beauties, who inspired them with such noble sentiments." To appreciate exactly the justice of these ancient traditions, there are many testimonies in later poets, and in historians. "The young knights (says the chevalier Bayard) flying the bonds of marriage, fearing lest by them they should be turned from the pursuit of their profession, made it a part of their duty to consecrate the first years of their installation into the order of knighthood, to the visiting distant countries and foreign courts, that they might render themselves perfect knights."

THE aversion of knights to idleness, their love of war and tournaments, their ardour for some signal atchievement in the profession of arms, are also justified, in Bayard's life, by the epitaph of John of Arces, son of the chevalier Blanc. The
enterprizes

enterprizes of the chevalier are there mentioned; and the voyages he made to Spain, Portugal, England, and Scotland, to defy the most renowned combatants of sword or lance. Tacitus paints the Germans in the same manner: “When a city languishes in the bosom of a long peace, almost all the young nobility go and serve elsewhere as volunteers: repose is a state of force to the Germans; perilous hazards and eminent dangers are their delight.” Green was the colour worn by the knights errant, which announced the verdure of youth, and the vigour of courage. The Monk of St. Denys relates, in his history, that in the tournament that Charles the Sixth gave in 1380, at St. Denys, for the knighthood of the king of Sicily, and his brother the count of Maine, twenty-two principal knights, who jousted at this feast, had green shields, the device on each engraved in gold: each knight was followed by his squire, who wore their helmets and their lances; and, that

no magnificence might be wanting, these knights waited for the ladies, who were to conduct them, agreeable to the order of the king, to the lists; and who repaired themselves thither in dresses of the same livery, dark green embroidered with gold and pearls: they came on beautiful palfreys to join these knights; “and so marvellous was the array, and so rich beseen (says this writer) that it seemed not only so many queens, but so many goddesses! for so much majesty, beauty, and splendour, were united, that the fictions of poets came far behind what was now beheld.” Thus testified the monk of St. Denys, in his History of Charles the Sixth.

In the voyages made by the knight errants, they studied the art of fencing, and the manner of jousting, in foreign nations: they wished to measure swords with their superiors in this art, to learn most ably the science of war, in practice as well as
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theory, by fighting on the side that appeared to them to be just and right : they also studied the ceremonials, or honours, and the principles of courtesy, observed in each court. Their talents and their politeness formed acquaintance with the princes and princesses of the highest reputation ; observed the most celebrated knights and dames ; learned their history, and recorded the most worthy passages of their lives ; that they might be enabled to give instructing relations, and agreeable and interesting reports of them, when they should return to their own country.

THE knight errants were particularly careful, in all the places thro' which they passed, at a distance from courts and cities, to engage in the cause of the oppressed : wherever there were violences to repress, or crimes to punish, there they were most assiduous. Women, the unfortunate of all ages and conditions, they flew to assist, that they might accomplish
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the sacred vow they had taken. Nor was the cause of religion less attended to by these knight errants; though it must be confessed, that the laws of this sacred profession were best observed in the early times of its institution (as is usually the case in temporal matters also); and that it shared the fate of all other systems in its decline. It is likewise to be considered, that the religion of these times was full of superstition; composed of ceremonies which, though sacredly observed, and in some respects useful, yet were calculated to give more outward appearance of religion than inward rectitude of heart. The proclamations at the tournaments were generally in the name of God and the Virgin Mary: they confessed, and heard mass, before battle; and, when they entered the lists, they held a sort of image, with which they made the sign of the cross. "The lord of Lalin, at the Pas d'Armes of 1449, had the flag in his hand painted with the figure of Christ on the cross; and he signed himself with

it," says Olivier de la Marche. And as the feasts of the tournaments were accompanied with these acts of devotion, so the feasts of the church were sometimes adorned with the images of the tournaments.

MATTHEW DE COUCI gives the recital of a pious feast, or procession, that the ambassadors of Burgundy saw at Milan in 1459, and which terminated by representations or spectacles of men and women; the former, armed as warriors, tilting for the love of their ladies. The procession of the Fête Dieu, in the city of Aix in Provence, and the personage of the Prince of Love exhibited in it, renders this account of Matthew de Couci, relative to a more distant time, very credible. M. de Fleury, speaking of the manners of the Christians in the 10th century, says, "all the world were Christians; so that it seemed a profession born, and that man and Christian was the same. Christianity (adds he) was become a part of the manners,

ners, and consisted chiefly in exterior ceremonies. Christians differed little from Jews and infidels, as to vices and virtues, but only as to ceremonies, which do not really make any one good at heart." The priests themselves could not read, and instructed the people only by a homily, or a short discourse, written down in the ancient ceremonials. If it happened that any one gave himself to letters, or lifted up his mind to the contemplation of the heavenly bodies, he passed instantly for a magician or a heretic.

By a scrupulous attention to all the public and private ceremonies of religion (for hearing mass the moment they were up was according to their mission) by gifts to the church, and to the monks, &c. many, in these dark ages, thought they might violate the other laws of Christianity : and, by a pilgrimage to some holy place, or an expedition against infidels or heretics, or taking up the monastic habit

at the end of life, or even ordering it to be put on them while they were dying—appease the divine vengeance, and receive the remission of their sins.—William of Malmſbury, an English historian, has declared, that Philip the Firſt, who was interred in the abbey of le Fleur, had taken the religious habit in that monastery. Geoffery, count of Anjou, who maintained a bloody war againſt his father for many years, it is certain (in 1060) renounced, on the evening before his death, his arms and temporal affairs, and put on the pious habit of a monk, to depart, thus clad, the more ſafely out of this world into the other. And ſo frequent was the uſe of dreſſing in monaſtic habits to die, that women had recourſe to this method of ſanctifying the end of a bad life.

THE abbé of Caunes, in the dioceſe of Narbonne, and his monks, declared by an authentic act, in 1309, that all thoſe
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who, by their last wills, gave orders to be buried in their abbey, with the monastic habit, should not be obliged, on that account, to leave them any thing : and they generously appointed two monks of the house to put this habit, at the point of death, on those who should devoutly wish to be invested in it, and to be received as monks, and brothers of the monastery. This custom continued long after the 14th century ; till the wars of the religionists checked this sort of devotion. Henry Estienne, a protestant author, in conformity to the opinions of his sect, observes shrewdly ; “ the count of Carpi, being the last who played this *fine game*, alone *remains a proverb and a jest !*”

THE form in which religion might appear, in peculiar circumstances of hurry and confusion, may be judged of by the following singular anecdote : — Etienne Vignoles, called Lahire, went with the count of Dunois to raise the siege of

Montarges, in 1427. When Lahire approached the siege (that is to say, the camp of the English, who surrounded the city) he found a chaplain, to whom he said, “ that he must give him absolution in all haste :” the chaplain replied, “ he must confess to him his sins.” Lahire answered, “ that he had not leisure, for he must immediately charge the enemy; and that he had done all that was the custom for soldiers to do :” on which the chaplain gave him absolution in his own way; and then Lahire made his prayer to God, saying, with his hands joined, “ God, I pray thee that thou wilt do this day for Lahire, what thou would’st that Lahire did for thee, if he was God and thou wast Lahire.” Then he rose up, well satisfied (for, undoubtedly, he did not mean to be profane, though he was so) with having well prayed, and piously spoken to God. A great stress on the mere ceremonial of religion did, in this instance,

instance, and is often seen to produce, though in a different mode, an unjustifiable familiarity with the Supreme Being.

WE have already shewn the great attention paid in these days to the ladies : they partook with the knights the diversions of hunting and the chace ; heard all their exploits in war and in the field ; their descriptions of the nature of the animals they pursued ; the manner of rearing their young, and treating their maladies. Gaiety, love, and bravery, were the great characteristics of an accomplished knight.

THE epithet of Joyous, applied from time immemorial to the sword of Charlemagne, is one of the most ancient testimonies of the natural gaiety of the French. War had an air of pleasantry peculiar to them ; they never spoke of it but as a feast, a game, a pastime : ‘ Let them play their game,’ say they of the cross-bow men, who were showering
down

down arrows on them ; and ‘ to play a great game,’ was their description of a battle.

FROISSART, relating the death of duke Winceslas, gives this picture of him : “ At that same time (1383) departed this life the gentle and handsome duke Winceslas of Bohemia, duke of Luxembourg and of Brabant, who had been, in his age, noble, amorous, joyous, wise, and brave.” And in the eulogy of the brave Foulque, nephew of Gerard de Roussillon, he completes his picture, by saying, “ he was skilful in hunting in the forests, and fishing in the rivers ; and no less skilful in the games of chess, tables, and dice.” And the historian of Bayard, relating the dinner that king Charles the Eighth gave to the duke of Savoy at Lyons, says, “ there were several discourses held there concerning dogs, birds, arms, and love !”

AN equal knowledge of these points formed the eulogy of a perfect knight. Many were the subtile descriptions of love—which involved situations the most desperate or delicious, to a heart tender and sincere; and qualities the most amiable, or disgusting, in a mistress. Sometimes these themes produced many pompous declamations to the honour of the ladies, a hundred times repeated; sometimes indecent exclamations against their conduct. A judge of these disputes was characterised by the title of the Prince of Love; his sentences were often equivocal, obscure, and enigmatical; and the parties, however abrupt in their private discourses, submitted with a respectful docility to his decisions. Cardinal Richelieu, and many persons of quality, retained this taste, which their forefathers had taken from the ancient customs; and had such themes renewed. The French academy, to please Cardinal Richelieu their founder, treated in their first meetings of
several

several subjects relative to love : and in the hotel of Longueville the wittiest persons, and those of the highest rank, engaged in these disputes. These lovers of the golden age of gallantry, from their subtle definitions, appeared less read in Plato than in the school of the Scotists, from whom they drew their refined distinctions. They boasted of loving only the virtues, the talents, and the graces of their ladies ; to find in them the only source of felicity ; and to aspire at nothing but maintaining, exalting, and spreading abroad in all places, the reputation and glory these virtues and graces had bestowed on them : each, profuse in the praise of his mistress, would never allow any other lady to be more perfect than her he adored. Some held the most violent passion for those they had never seen : a striking instance of which is given in the life of Geoffron Rudel, in the History of the Troubadours.

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THIS love was metaphysical, and most respectful; and did not, as is proved in the writings of the Troubadours (who have conveyed the pictures of these times, and are to be valued for giving the original view of ages so remote) always banish from their discourses cold, trite, and familiar images, the natural productions of minds in a rude and unimproved state.

THE Chevalier de la Tour speaks of the fanaticism of the Lovers, who formed a kind of pastoral life in Poitou, during the imprisonment of St. Lewis; and who, under pretext of delivering him, over-ran the confines of Flanders and Picardy, and were at last exterminated in the Orleanois: under the same pretext, Languedoc was desolated in 1320. They called their society the Fraternity of Penitents in Love; others called them Galois, and Galoises; for the women, as well as the men, disputed who should the most zealously maintain

tain the honour of this extravagant religion; the object of which was, to prove the excess of their love, by an invincible determination to brave the rigour of the seasons, and the hardships of an itinerant life: and knights, squires, ladies, and demoiselles, who embraced this reform, were, on the same principles, in the burning heats of summer, to wrap themselves up in warm cloaks and double hoods, and to have great fires, at which they were obliged, by the laws of the order, to stand and roast themselves, as if they were pinched with cold;—all this was probably done, in allusion to the power love has to work the most strange metamorphoses. When winter spread its ice and its frosts, love then changed the order of the seasons: the lover who ranged under his banner then burned with the most ardent fires; a small single petticoat, with a thin long corset, composed the dress of the ladies; and to have worn fur cloaks, gloves, or muffs, or to have had

had a fire, would have been, with this sect, a capital crime. The chimnies of their great halls were adorned with winter-greens, if greens were to be had; those of their chambers were done up in the same manner; and a light serge, without plush, was all the covering they had to their beds. Gontier, an ancient poet, says, alluding probably to this—

“ They fear no cold, whom strong love hold.”

The lovers asked, from the beauty to whom they were slaves, only the privilege of touching their hands or lips; forms borrowed from the ceremony of homage; that is to say, the honour of holding from them their existence, as a fief: but they were not always, any more others, faithful to the bonds they had taken.

As it was a time of ignorance, so there was much licentiousness on many occasions: and St. Lewis groaned, to find it
established

established even near his tent, during the most holy of the crusades (for though the ceremonials were by many punctiliously observed, yet little respect was paid to the most sacred and honourable laws of ancient Chivalry) : and Joinville, the confidant of St. Lewis, reports the ignominy this prince caused one of the knights to suffer, whom he surprized in the crime of adultery ; which shews how necessary it was, to stop the effects of the general corruption.

THE monk of Vigemois, towards 1180, speaking of the licence which reigned in the troops, counted, in one of the French armies, fifteen hundred concubines ; whose dress and ornaments cost immense sums. And the same historian adds, “ that respect for the public did not confine them to the class they belonged to ; but, adorned as were the noblest dames, they were confounded, from their appearance, with them : and even the queen herself was deceived, on beholding

beholding a woman of this sort at church. As she was going to perform the ceremony of kissing the Pax, she embraced her (which was the custom) as she did the other ladies; but, being better informed, she made great complaints to the king her husband; and that monarch forbade all such women to wear the mantua, the garment by which married women were distinguished.—
Preachers the most in credit launched their censures against this licentiousness: and St. Denys deplores, in these terms, the miseries of his monastery. After the recital of the tournaments made in 1389, at St. Denys, for the knighthood of the king of Sicily, and his brother:—"Till then (says he) all went well; but the last night spoiled all, by the dangerous licence of masking, and permitting all sorts of farcical posture-dances to be continued through the night, ill suited to the dignity of such considerable personages; and which I judge it fit to remark in this history, to serve as an example in future
Z times,

times, from the disorders it occasioned; for this ill custom of making night into day, joined with the liberty of eating and drinking to excess, caused many freedoms to be taken by many persons, as unworthy the presence of the king as the sanctity of the place in which he kept his court. To sum up all in a few words (adds he) husbands suffered the dishonour of their wives, and fathers of their daughters." Such were the evils practised in this feast; which the king concluded the solemnization of by a thousand sorts of presents, given not only to the knights and squires who signalized themselves therein, but to the ladies and demoiselles, to whom he gave diamond ear-rings, jewels, and rich stuffs; and honoured the principal of them by a salutation, on the disbanding of his court. In the great castles there were beheld, also, manners that proved no less the ignorance than the corruptness of these ages: so that a romancer says, satirically, "a lady in her castle, who had received a knight,

knight, could not sleep till she had presented him with a fair companion of her household."

As to the manners of the Christians who went on the crusades, Joinville says, they were worse than those of the other armies: all sorts of vices reigned; those that the pilgrims brought from their own countries, and those of the countries they came to, which they caught, and added to their own.

BUT to pass to the inconveniences that Military Chivalry occasioned, with regard to the respect due to royal authority, and to the attachment of the subject to his country:—a multitude of lords and barons had vassals, knights, and squires, and perhaps even fraternities of arms, who were rendered almost independent, and often rebelled against the princes they served; and, from caprice and passion, or sordid interest, sold their services to the enemies of the state.

KING Charles the Sixth, in 1370, testified his discontent at the conduct of the count d'Osternant, his ally, who had accepted the order of the Garter: and the duke of Orleans was equally censured for binding himself, in 1399, by a fraternity of arms and alliance, to the duke of Lancaster, who soon after dethroned Richard king of England, son-in-law of king Charles the Sixth. The credit and the authority gained by such societies were held of dangerous consequence to the repose of the state. It was alledged against the Essars, that, in 1413, under pretext of assisting at a tournament, which was to be in the park of Vincennes, but in reality to take away the king and the duke de Guienne (having bribed a great number of their troops for this purpose) they held in Brie near five hundred armed men. Charles the Seventh was often agitated with jealousy and suspicions against the dukes of Orleans, Bretagne, and others, who seemed to hold intelli-
gences

gences contrary to his authority; whether for having refused his orders, or for having accepted those of the duke of Burgundy.—But we will proceed to the abuses of Chivalry, in other parts of the political estate.

THE knights, who, in their fiefs, had been (so to speak) the arbiters of justice and of war, abandoned, towards the time of Philip le Bel, Lewis le Hutin, and Philip le Long, the administration of justice; and, without ceasing, were occupied in the continual quarrels of the kings of France and England; and gave themselves wholly up to the exercise of arms in war and tournaments: whereas, in the first ages of the French monarchy, the great lords and courtiers were destined equally to the defence of private persons, by their justice and eloquence, as to the public, by their arms; imitating hereby the example of the Romans: in reference to whom was this canon law:—‘The service in the palace,

and the power of pleading, are prohibited to criminals ;' which proves the mutual exercise of both, long before and in the first ages of Chivalry : and that these double offices, of warrior and judge, were often united in the greatest lords and knights, is seen in the History of the Albigenfes, where Gui Cap de Porc is described as a knight of the higheft birth, the greateft valour, and as the beft lawyer in Chriftendom. And the brave captain, Peter de Monraby (fays Gerard de Rouffillon) " was fo dangerously wounded in a battle, that he was obliged to keep his bed five years, without being able to mount on horfeback, or judge a procefs." This union of offices depended, however, on talents and inclination, and was not of abfolute neceffity, as, indeed, it was impoffible it fhould be. In an old romance it is obferved, agreeable to this, that a lady who had for her husband a rich lord, captivated the heart of a knight. The husband was an eloquent man, a fine
speaker,

speaker, and of able judgment; and it was his favourite employment to assist at pleadings, and to pronounce judgment: the lover, on the contrary, breathed ardently the desire of acquiring glory, gaining the prizes at tournaments, and getting the reputation of a brave knight.

As to the tournaments, though they were prohibited by the Popes, on account of the blood there shed—with menaces to deprive of ecclesiastical sepulchre those who should be killed in them—yet they were always held in honour, to the loss of many lives. In 1240 sixty knights, in a tournament at Nuys, near Cologne, were slain. The excessive expences they drew on the nobility, which prevented their contributions to the wars, was the reason of their being interdicted in France. Other princes encouraged them, that they might lower their vassals, and lead them to spend their fortunes in excess of emulation; and the tournaments, in this view,

were the gulph of the nobles, who vied with each other in the most inconceivable extravagancies.

BEAUCAIRE, still a celebrated place for its fairs, was once still more so for the useless and criminal prodigality observed at the feasts which, in the midst of summer, were held there by the princes, the lords, and knights. In 1174 the king of England proclaimed a tournament there, which was to celebrate the reconciliation of Remond, duke of Narbonne, with the king of Arragon. The monarchs were not there; but ten thousand lords and knights caused their names to resound by the most lavish prodigality. The count de Thoulouse gave to Remond d'Agout a hundred thousand pieces of money; and the latter, a generous and magnificent knight, distributed them immediately, in equal portions, to a hundred other knights. Bertran Raibaux having ordered them to plough, with twelve pair of oxen, the field
of

of the tournament, had thirty thousand pieces of money sowed in it ;—the expression ‘ sown with silver’ was, perhaps, derived from hence. William Gros de Martello, who came to this court, accompanied with four hundred knights, employed no other fire to prepare the meats of his table, but what was made with wax candles and flambeaux. The countess de Sorgue sent a crown of the value of forty thousand sols to William Meta, who was to be proclaimed Prince of the Jongleurs. In fine, Romnous de Venous shewed, in his prodigality, the most barbarous cruelty; he had thirty fine horses brought thither, and as a spectacle of magnificence, as he called it (devoutly hoped to be without example) had these noble and unfortunate victims of his cruelty burnt alive before all the spectators. Every other instance of the most foolish or desperate prodigality was nothing, compared to this savage instance of inhumanity. Houses, lands, lives, lost freely by the owners, or with
mutual

mutual consent, were at the will of the givers or losers; but to be wanton in barbarity to such defenceless, noble, useful animals, must cause every breast to shudder; and can have only one use in the reciting, which is, to prove that when men once give into excesses, for the sake of emulation and prodigality, it so depraves the mind, as to hazard its becoming abandoned to the vilest actions, under the deluding mask of greatness and generosity.

By such effects of the tournaments they were degraded; and opulence, intrigue, and strength, taking place instead of courage and virtue, proved their ruin. It is possible it was from this degradation of Chivalry, that the famous proverb came into vogue, 'A good name is better than a golden girdle:' for this made a part of the dress of the knights, as well as of the ladies, to whom it has been solely applied. The power of the knights being thus changed into means of private interest, or private quarrels; and not being able to breathe

breathe in peace, when public wars called not for their services; they became no better than robbers and victims of each other, and the poor people were often sacrificed to their ungoverned animosities and rage. Thus, unjust themselves, they could not but be unjust to others: they abandoned all administration of justice; and France, often desolated in the midst of its wars and troubles, was obliged to let these disorders go unpunished; and those who should have defended the interests of the nation they belonged to, as anciently their progenitors did, were multiplying every day its evils, by the promotions that took place without number in the fatal civil wars. Thus did they add to the number of its tyrants, and to the increase of public misery; insomuch that it was found necessary sometimes to arm against those its pretended defenders, as we find in the reigns of king John and Charles the Fifth.

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THE more consequence those knights lost by their increased number, the more they attempted to regain, by a forced authority, what had been granted to the benevolence and bravery of their ancestors; and by violence and rapine lift themselves from the dust to which they were allied. A peasant in the twelfth century, who led his cart, drawn by two oxen, and loaded with wax, to the castle of his lord, was metamorphosed very soon, by hitting the temper of his master, and his foolish taste for profusion; and, among other things, contriving for him a most superb illumination: for this zeal and complaisance he was rewarded with the gift of a fief, had noble land granted to him, and his children were decorated with the honour of Chivalry. This abuse of the rewards due to merit increased so shamefully, that, Brantome observes, “at last they created themselves knights, without applying to the king; infomuch that knights were
more

more in number now (such as they were) than formerly were seen of squires and young gentlewomen in their service : and to their wives they gave the title of Madam, belonging only to nobility ; and they themselves, who were only allowed to wear silver, now usurp golden spurs.”—

“ They reckon (says la Noue) more than three hundred gentlemen, who, by dint of importunity, obtained of the king the order of St. Michel ; but they sorely repented, and near a hundred of them hid in their chests the mark they had received from the order of the king, to avoid the expences they had, by engaging in this condition, brought on themselves, and which would have brought them, had they continued in it, to the alms-house.”

And he adds, “ that the order given by Henry the Third did not succeed better with any of those who had obtained it.”

The profound ignorance also of many knights (for some could not even read) obliged them not only to abandon the
administration

administration of justice, but their own affairs; which either went to ruin by such ill conduct, or, if they used unlawful measures to repair them, they fell into the snares of men who saw their necessity, and wished to rise on their fall; for most of the officers, both civil and ecclesiastical, instead of the knowledge of scripture or law, knew only the calculations of unjust profits, and the subtilty of chicanery, which they had brought with them from the countries beyond the mountains.

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS, in a ballad he wrote, laments the good old times, in which the study of the liberal arts, refused to slaves or bondmen, was solely reserved to the nobles:—"Then the nobles made glorious conquests, and maintained themselves in the honour that science will always give, when joined with the profession of arms: formerly (he adds) the first twenty years of life were passed in receiving instruction, as such youths could

not receive knighthood; now education is begun by setting the young men on horseback. Their limbs, yet weak, are stretched and exercised, without giving them time to strengthen them, and their dispositions and health are ruined by leading them into all excesses: delivered up to their passions, when they should have been cultivating modesty, and to a love of gaming instead of virtue, they give up the acquirement of knowledge to their slaves; who, as it must needs happen, become their masters in all things." To this he adds a picture of the pride of the clergy, insulting the impoverished nobles, and betraying the interests of their king; whose service is abandoned, and whose kingdom is lost.

THESE complaints had a real foundation. A governor of a very important place was so ignorant, as to be under the necessity of getting another to read an order of state; and Du Guesclin, the first man of his age, was not a jot wiser:—being besieged

sieged in Rennes; and receiving a herald from the post of the duke of Lancaster, who brought him a safe conduct to admit him to that prince; he took the writing, and delivered it to another to read; for nothing knew he, or would deign to know, of letters: "altho' (says the historian) he suffered not himself to be held in awe by clerks, whom he called Furred Hoods; and for their abuses opposed them resolutely, and held them in the highest contempt and indignity."

NOTWITHSTANDING the disorders here faithfully related, and which, more or less, all establishments are subject to, Chivalry sustained its reputation, from the high esteem it was in for so many ages, founded on the wisdom of its laws, and the glory of its heroes; and probably it would have subsisted to the latest period, if other causes, which remain to be revealed, had not brought on its total ruin.

THE history of France presents several princes on the throne, who were the models and the protectors of Chivalry. Of all these the most illustrious seem to have been Charles the Sixth and Seventh, and Francis the First. Charles the Sixth breathed nothing but war : on his emerging from childhood, a glorious victory had signalized his first arms; and he was reproached for his excessive passion for tournaments, even when tournaments were held in the highest honour. Contrary to the usual custom of princes, and above all of kings, he measured swords with the bravest and most skillful jousts, without examining, whether they were or were not of noble birth : and this lowered his dignity and exposed his life. And to the very end of his reign, in 1414, notwithstanding the deplorable state of his health, he re-animated his oppressed vigour, appeared again in arms, and saw with delight in the duke de Guienne, his son, a worthy competitor of his love and skill in the

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exercifes of Chivalry. Some authors have attributed the law, which forbade princes to expose their perfons in tournaments, to the infirmities of Robert count de Clermont, fon of St. Louis, caufed by the blows of the maces he received in a tournament: but the law was anterior; it exifted from the time of Lewis the Seventh, and Philip Auguftus. The author of the romance of Gerard de Rouffillon alludes to this law, when he fays, that Gerard, after having been a fpectator of the tournaments of his vaffals, exercifed himfelf againft a ftake; probably the figure in wood of an armed man. Not being allowed to mix with his inferiors, he was glad to fhew them the grace and addrefs with which he could handle his arms, and to give them a model of excellence. Charles the Sixth, at the marriage of the count of Hainault, would not be bound by this custom: he would joust againft one named Colart d'Efpinay, a moft reputed joufter; and valiantly did he fhew
his

his skill in arms: and for his youth and vigour, he was then praised and admired. But when, being married, he continued to display his talents in jousting, sufficiently known before, many of the nobles were ill content that he did so; and said the danger was too great, and he should have been persuaded otherwise: but the answer was, He would not be persuaded. Thus he degraded his royal dignity, by mixing in the crowd with so little caution and gravity. Neither ill health (in part owing to such violent exercises) nor the murmurs of his people could restrain him. On the arrival of the ambassador, who came from England to treat of the marriage of his daughter Catharine, he regaled them with superb feasts of all kinds; but above all with tournaments, in which he jousted against the duke of Alençon, in the presence of the queen and the princesses of her court; and he caused the young duke de Guienne also, his son, the presumptive heir of his talents as well

as of his crown, to make proof of his valour, and the fine vigour of his youth. He ran several courses with such address and courage, that the admiration of him was very great.

THE valour of Charles the Seventh, and what he did to wrest from the English the finest provinces of his monarchy, is graved in ineffaceable characters in the souls of a nation so tenderly attached to their legitimate sovereigns. Francis the First, the conqueror of Marignan, of a nation till then looked on as invincible (for the Swiss stiled themselves till then the Conquerors of Princes), passed almost all his life in camps and armies. His bravery, his probity, his frankness, his generosity, his gallantry, his fine figure, his open and martial physiognomy,—all would have given him the preference, even in the most ancient period of romance, as the chief of knights errant ; and his name inscribed among the list of the Nine Worthies,

thies, would not have sullied their honour. In all his actions, he proposed to himself for a model the laws of Ancient Chivalry, which he preferred to the usual maxims of politics. He aspired also to the glory of the Nine Worthies (so well known in the ancient courts, though lost to the knowledge of later periods, or only preserved by tradition and the ceremonies of our kings at arms), and he shewed himself to his court, dressed in the manner of those ancient heroes. A young gentlewoman seeing him one day in that equipage, told him, by way of compliment, she thought she beheld in his person one of the *Neuf Léproux*, meaning to have said *Neuf Preux*.

Who would have imagined, that under these three reigns of Charles the Sixth, Henry the Seventh, and Francis the First, so seemingly favourable to Chivalry, its ruin should commence? yet so it really was. The divisions that took place among the princes of the royal blood, during

king Charles's malady, caused in all the parts of the government an infinity of disorders; and those introduced into chivalry were not the least pernicious. Those princes considered the authority (almost despotic) which passed into their hands, and which they wrested from each other without ceasing, as a proper instrument to serve their ambition, their cupidity, and the mutual hatred that devoured them. If in some lucid intervals the unfortunate monarch resumed over them the absolute power they had torn from him, it was only to bestow it on favourites; who made as bad a use of it, alternately rising on the ruins of each other. The chiefs of these different parties thought they could only sustain themselves by the aids of Chivalry; and not reflecting that it was the excellent constitution of Chivalry, and not the multitude of knights, that produced the strength of states,—they sought to procure a great number of creatures by the frequent and

undistinguishing promotions they made: From the candidates for this new sort of knighthood, neither strength nor expence was exacted: the honour was lavished on children of ten and even seven years of age, instead of waiting the time of squires' service, and perfection in the exercise of arms. There was no account of probity nor of manners: raw men and boys became rich with the spoils of the state, in places they had gained by intrigue, and in which they maintained themselves by the vilest flattery; thus receiving the rewards due only to the brave and worthy defenders of the state. Many of them did indeed lose their lives in its service; for, from their inexperience and rashness, they were only so many victims dressed out and adorned for sacrifice; and these thunderers of war, who were flying about every where, threatening to destroy all the world, were so many Adonis's covered over with pearls; and their persons more lily-white and shining than

the finest ivory :—wholly occupied with their dress and adjustments, and carrying always in their hands little glassess, to smooth the hairs that had straggled out of their places. If these were the exercises they were employed in, and such the effeminate life they lived, no wonder that Chivalry declined and fell into abhorrence. It was, however, kept alive, on the brink of its destruction, by the effort of Charles the Seventh, who had no other resources by which to support himself. To the desire of preserving his crown, was joined the ardour of preserving a mistress, in whom reigned all those sentiments of glory, with which Ancient Chivalry had inspired ladies of the highest birth : and his too frequent promotions of knights was to excite and recompense the valour of his subjects, on occasions which war continually furnished him with.

BUT however powerful these succours to strengthen his tottering throne, he
failed

failed not to add others. He instituted a new body of militia, regularly paid from a new tax, called the Gendarmery, or horse of the king's household, by which he proposed to increase the emulation of the knights. And he was not deceived; for he beheld in this militia warriors capable of disputing with their rivals, and of gathering from them, in after-times, the palm of glory. The more ardour these new levies expressed, the more eager were the nobility of France to inscribe their names in their muster-roll: for, besides the advantage they found in a service which admitted of no interruption, there was also a right, in these militia, to command the troops, which was not confined to the rank of banneret or knight; and this continued service rendered the Gendarmery better disciplined, and more able and useful in the armies: and, if they did not possess the strict manners and all the noble virtues of Ancient Chivalry, they were not at all deficient in the heroic valour

lour of it, which they preserve with the most exact military discipline to this day. Francis the First, finally, seemed created on purpose to recover, in the military state, the true spirit of Ancient Chivalry. It cannot be doubted, that the elevation of his genius, and his love of war, caused him to cherish particularly the military virtues : he had shewn how high they were in his esteem, when, at the battle of Marignan, he would be armed a knight by the chevalier Bayard.

THE example of Francis the First was followed by that of his son, Henry the Second, who, when he was dauphin, at the camp of Marseilles in 1536, would receive the honour of Chivalry from no other hand but that of the marechal de Biez : which afterwards saved the life of the marechal, who was going to be executed for some action of his son-in-law, which brought both into trouble. But Henry, remembering that to the marechal
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he owed his knighthood, sent him instantly a pardon.

FRANCIS the First carried his love and esteem for talents of every kind to the highest pitch, whatever was the rank of those who possessed them: he accorded his protection and rewards to all without distinction; he saw in them no superiority, but what their genius and merit gave them. Those who excelled in the knowledge of the laws, the sciences, and letters, he decorated with the sword, dress, and prerogatives of Chivalry, as badges of honour; and by so doing, taught his nobility (almost all warriors) that they should reserve a part of their esteem for those qualities, which equally concur with military talents to the glory of the state. But such examples becoming too frequent, produced a contrary effect; and stamped still more powerfully on the minds of the nobles, the pre-eminence of valour; and that no other glory was worthy of their pursuit.

Bouteiller,

Bouteiller, a famous advocate in 1380, says, “ a lawyer may and ought to wear gold, as well as the knights ; they are in the records called knights of law, and have equal privileges.” There was a dispute however on this matter, held before the emperor Sigismund, at the council of Bale, in 1431 ; when he assigned the precedence to the doctors of laws over the knights : “ For I can (says he), in one day, make an hundred armed knights ; but a good doctor of laws, was I to live a thousand years, I could not make.” And the emperor Charles the Fourth gave the dubbing to Barthole the advocate, and even the right of bearing the arms of Bohemia : and Charles duke of Brissac made William Bailli, an advocate in the parliament of Paris, a knight ; and he was confirmed in this dignity by Henry the Second and Charles the Ninth : and the emperor Charles the Fifth honoured those artists, who were eminent for their genius, with the same dignity and privileges.

leges. But those who were descended from the first heroes, or who were created knights for their military services, could never endure to divide their glory with such persons, or to behave to them as their equals : and their jealousy was so vehement, that some knights chose to give up knighthood, and many neglected the usual opportunities of receiving knighthood at breaches, or in the field of battle, because knighthood had been conferred on magistrates and men of letters : though the administration of justice was always allowed one of the essential offices of ancient Chivalry. They did not reflect on this ; nor that magistrates combated, without ceasing, the most dangerous enemies of the state,—the disturbers of the public peace ; nor foresaw that their successors, having only the laws and their own courage for their arms, would be obliged, under the reigns of Henry the Third and Henry the Fourth, to make head against the efforts of a mutinous populace, to aid
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the legitimate heir of the crown to mount the throne, to which these rebels dared to dispute his right. In fact, the union of these bodies, for the preservation of good order and the defence of the nation, was necessary, and both were of equal importance, and deserved equal honour: and this was evident from the very custom of kings and the higher barons, who called the knights to their councils; and imposed the obligation of their assisting at them with as much equity and good faith, as they had shewn intrepidity and valour in their military services.

KING Charles the Eighth, holding a council in the hotel of the bishop of Paris, on the subject of a letter written by the archduke Maximilian, in 1486, to the inhabitants of the city of Paris, to induce them to revolt,—assembled the knights of his order, and his other counsellors, to read to them his answer, and to have their opinion. Montluc followed this example in his councils of war; and shewed

ed the knights of his order the letters which he wrote, and communicated to them his designs, for their advice.

Since the time of Francis the First, there have been few knights created, except on the field of battle; as in the instances of the brave Montluc, who received the sword of Chivalry from the duke d'Anguien, after the battle of Cerisoles in 1544; and Froelich, colonel-general of the thirteen Swiss ensigns, whom the king ennobled, and invested with the charge of lieutenant of the hundred Swiss. We may also consider the visit king Henry the Fourth made to M. de Rosni, wounded in the battle of Yvri in 1590, as a remnant of the ancient custom of military Chivalry: The king, embracing him in the presence of several princes, captains, and noble knights, said to him—"I embrace you with my open arms, and declare you, in the sight of all these, a true and faithful knight; not only by the orders I now confer on you, of St. Michael
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and the Holy Ghost, but more especially by the sincere and perfect affection in which I hold you."

THE fatal accident, which caused Henry the Second to perish in the midst of his court, and in the view of a nation to whom he was dear, produced a revolution in the minds of the French, which completed the ruin of Chivalry: and though many, among them the archbishop of Bourges, in his harangue to his states in 1589, supported its cause; and Rosni, just before the death of Henry the Fourth, and Lewis the Thirteenth and Fourteenth, did confer knighthood; and other princes, in some cases; yet this mortal stroke extinguished, in the hearts of the French, the ardour they had till this time testified for jousts and tournaments: and they feared to recall a spectacle, which had thrown, and might again throw, all France into consternation. The spirit of fighting could not, however, be suppressed,

pressed, but flamed out in private duels ; and, for want of employment, it came to pass that jousts of courtesy were turned into combats of outrage ; which, joined to the civil wars, were nearly the destruction of the French nobility.

To the introduction of letters was owing the reformation and safety of the French nation. These diffused into their hearts, in this declining period of their state, the sentiments of true humanity ; and taught them a more uniform course of virtue. Du Guesclin, we have seen, and some others, could not even read ; and injudiciously despised all those who knew or professed letters. Affecting were the complaints made by Alain Chartier, on this ignorance of princes and great lords : “ With idle negligence immured, they live in ease, who are ordained to watch the public good ; as if they had no other work, but still to eat, and drink, and be admired : and this is their language—To know letters

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is a reproach to men of noble rank; to write and read, a shame to gentry.—Oh who can utter greater folly! who can publish more alarming errors!—A king thus foolish is a crowned ass.” The count of Anjou used this phrase as a proverb: Being vexed that king Lewis, son of Lewis the Simple, and his courtiers, mocked him for mixing among the clerks or scholars in the church of Tours,—he replied boldly, “A king without letters, and a crowned ass, are only one and the same thing.” M. Fleury, agreeable to this, speaking of the care Charlemagne took for the ecclesiastical discipline and the re-establishment of letters, says, “The loss of the arts and of letters would be of small account, if religion was not concerned in it: but religion cannot subsist without study, and instruction to preserve sound maxims and good morals.

PERMIT me, therefore, to conclude this account of Chivalry, with recalling

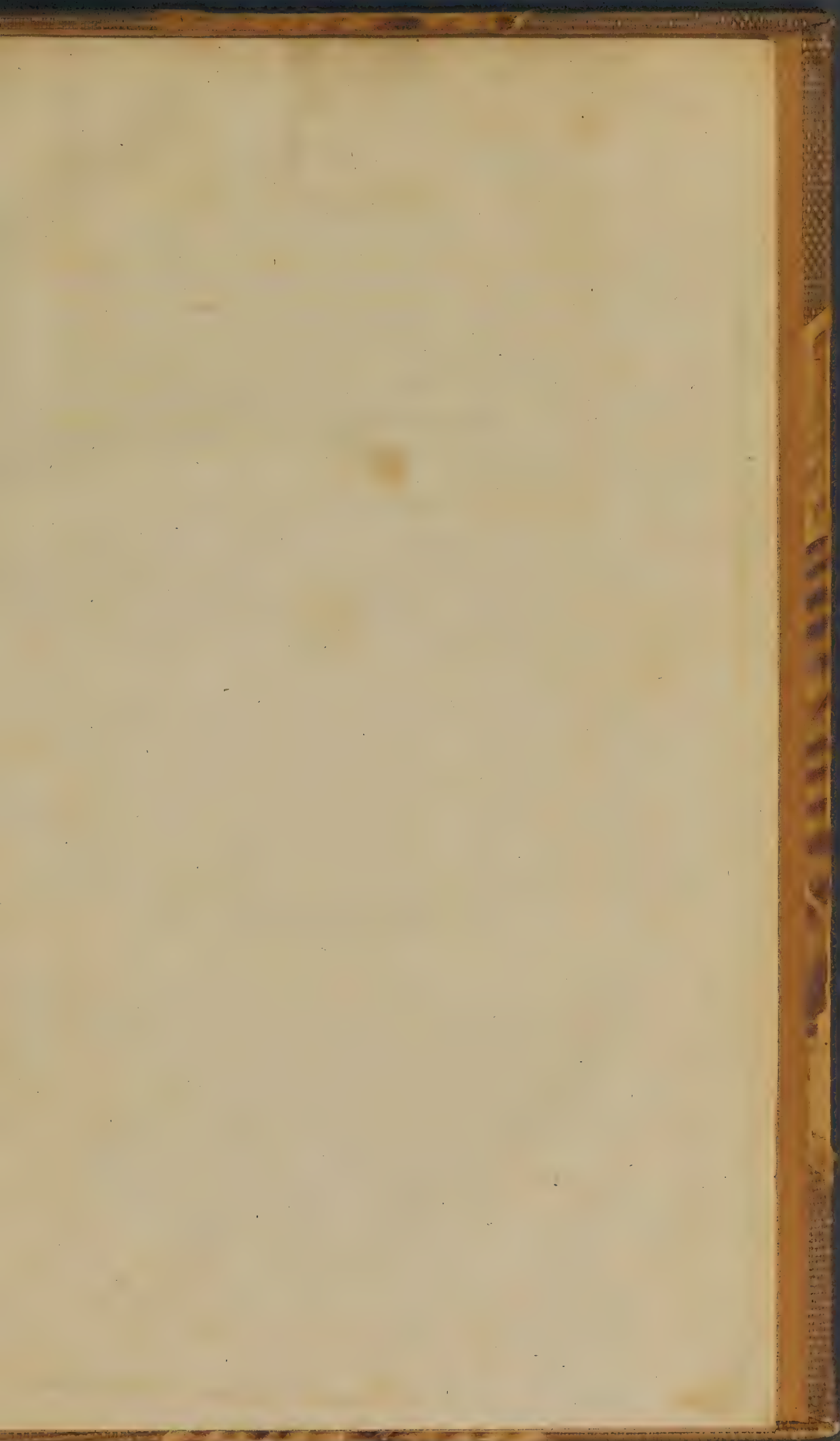
to view those ancient heroes, whose eminence in justice and good morals, no less than in the greatest acts of valour, is worthy of the highest admiration. A generous hospitality, which is the true magnificence, appears to have governed all their actions. The revenue of many of those nobles (as is still the case with some of the first families in France) was immense; and it was necessary it should be so, to support the nobility of their ancestors, and such a multitude of vassals. Their bounty seems to have been uniformly dispensed for the blessing of millions; not lavished away with an idle ostentation. But, above all, how praise-worthy was their attention to the youth of both sexes, whom they nourished with a parental and judicious care; and who grew up, under their examples, patterns of virtue, courage, and good manners! With respect to science, their knowledge was defective; and their system of education required so

many domestic and military duties, as to leave little time for study : but they must have obtained much information, some from their travels into different countries, and observation of their laws and manners ; others from the exact attention to the distribution of justice, when they arrived at the honour of knighthood ; and all from the narrations made by the knights on their return, the compositions of the Troubadours, the conversation of their lords and ladies, and that of the noble guests received at their castles. The practical and excellent effects of this education was proved, in numberless instances, in the first ages of Chivalry ; many of which have been given in these Memoirs. Should the view of such amiable characters inspire the hearts of those, who are entering into life, with the same modest diffidence of themselves—the same admirable industry in the stations assigned them—and the same grateful, observant,
and

and courteous attention to their benefactors and superiors, which shone so conspicuously in the youth of both sexes, in the first ages of Chivalry,—I shall feel myself amply rewarded for my labour.—Nor let it be forgotten, that it was the neglect of these virtues in education, and the increase of luxury and dissipation from such neglect, that brought the kingdom of France, in succeeding ages, to the brink of ruin : and it is an awful consideration, that however dissimilar in some respects, yet in this point, with all the superior knowledge we boast in this enlightened period and country, the declining age of Chivalry bears a strong resemblance to the present times. Happy will it be, indeed, if that affectionate compact of youth and age, that discretion and modesty, and that noble hospitality of character and refinement of manners, shall revive in this nation, which, in the first years of Chivalry, were the foundation of its glory (and for which,

which, in the good old times, the English were no less renowned); and shall join with the increase of knowledge to check the progress of dissipation, and restore those principles of morality, order, and respect, which can alone insure solid virtue, real elegance, and public peace.

F I N I S.



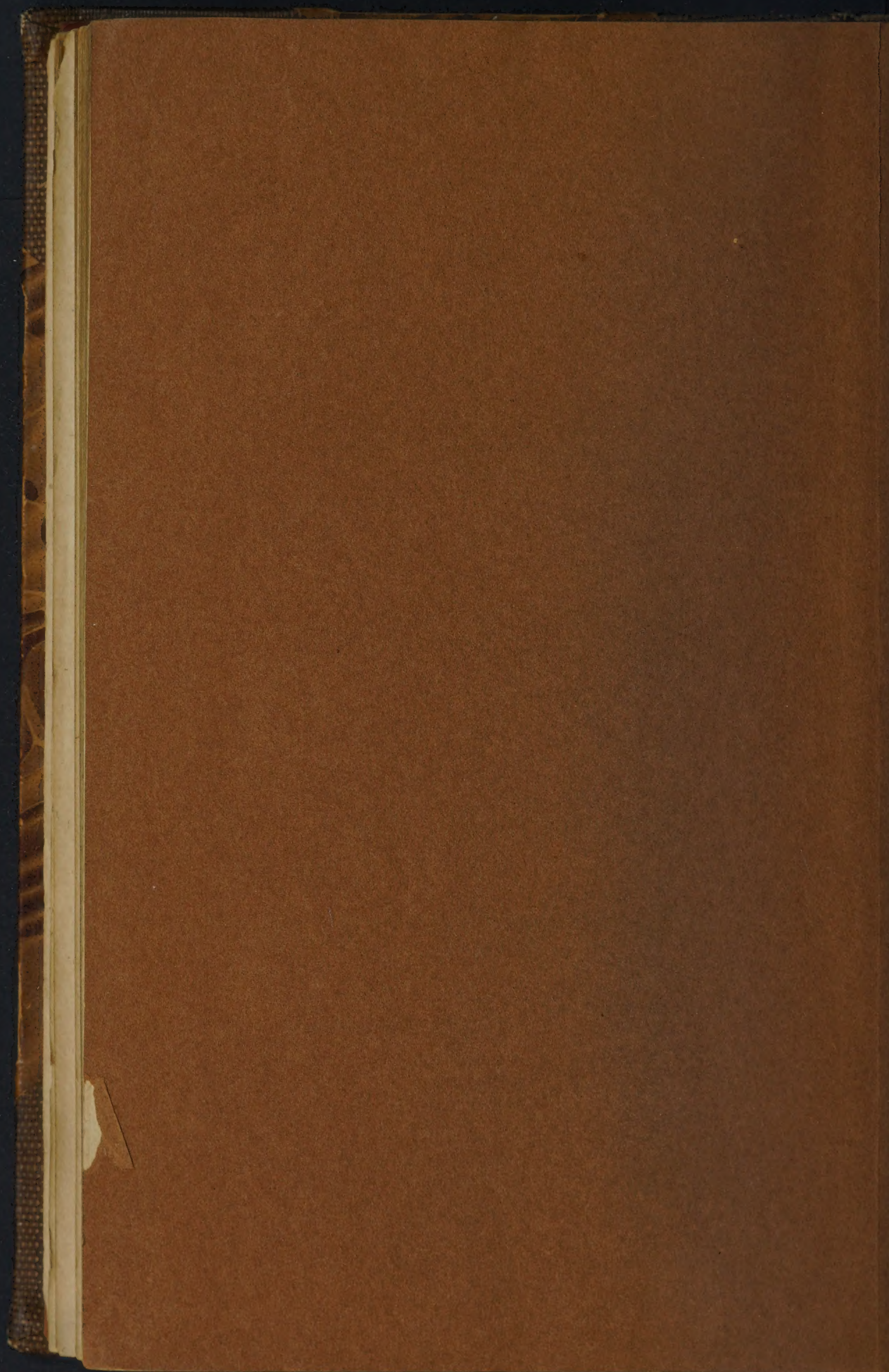
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